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DTM STATEMENT ON 12 YEARS OF DEVOLUTION IN KENYA

As Kenya marks 12 years since ushering in devolution, Development Through Media (DTM) joins citizens, institutions, and partners in reflecting on the journey of grassroots empowerment, equity, and participatory development.

Since 2013, over Kshs 4.7 trillion has been disbursed to county governments. These investments have driven notable gains in healthcare, roads, agriculture, youth empowerment, and localised economic growth. Devolution has brought government closer to the people, proving its value as a tool for inclusion and transformation.

However, we must acknowledge the persistent and widely publicised bottlenecks —corruption, delayed disbursements, weak oversight, and overlapping mandates—that continue to undermine the full realisation of devolution’s promise.

Further, DTM joins other forces in cautioning against simplistic calls to reduce or increase the number of counties. The problem lies not in the structure but in the quality of governance and the commitment to accountability.

To reinvigorate devolution, we urge bold reforms that focus on fiscal discipline, anti-corruption, performance-based funding, and civic education. The national government must disburse funds on time, and citizens must be empowered to demand results.

As a media-based CSO, DTM will continue to amplify community voices, promote evidence-based advocacy, and facilitate dialogue between the governed and the governors. Devolution must work for everyone—not just the political class.

Let’s fix devolution. Not abandon it. Not expand it without sense. Let’s make it work.

By Dommie Yambo-Odotte
Executive Director/Producer.