



The Wajir Windward and Leeward Divide: A Mountain of Political Power, Resources, and Unequal Development

By Osman Ali Hassan

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Wajir County can be understood through the simple but powerful image of a mountain divided into a windward side and a leeward side. On a mountain, the windward side receives the greater force of the wind and usually more rainfall, while the leeward side lies in the shadow of the mountain and often receives much less moisture. The difference between the two sides can therefore become a useful metaphor for understanding political representation, government resources, public institutions, social services, economic opportunities, and development within Wajir County. In this comparison, Wajir North, Wajir East, Wajir Central, Tarbaj, and Eldas can be viewed as forming the windward side, while Wajir South represents the leeward side. The purpose of this comparison is not to suggest that geography alone determines political or economic outcomes. Rather, it provides a simple way of describing how residents may perceive the distribution of political influence, government institutions, public investment, and social services across the county.

Wajir County is geographically large, socially diverse, and economically challenged. Its people have historically depended heavily on pastoralism, livestock, small-scale trade, public employment, humanitarian assistance, and other activities suited to an arid and semi-arid environment. Because of the size of the county, distance between settlements and administrative centers can have a major effect on access to government services. A government office located in Wajir town may technically serve the entire county, but physical distance, transportation costs, road conditions, communication difficulties, and the concentration of economic activity around the county headquarters can make access much easier for some residents than for others. This is where the windward and leeward mountain comparison becomes meaningful. The windward side represents the part of the county that appears to receive greater political visibility, institutional concentration, administrative attention, and economic activity, while the leeward side represents the part that many residents perceive as being further from the center of political and government power.

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The political geography of Wajir County makes this comparison especially important. The county contains several constituencies and wards with different levels of political representation and different geographical circumstances. Wajir North, Wajir East, Wajir Central, Tarbaj, and Eldas are positioned in this metaphorical windward zone, while Wajir South occupies the leeward position. In political terms, representation is not simply a matter of the number of elected leaders. It is also about the location of political institutions, the influence exercised by political leaders, the ability of communities to communicate their needs to decision-makers, and the extent to which government programs become visible in different parts of the county. The windward side in this comparison appears particularly powerful because it contains Wajir town, the principal urban and administrative center of the county.

Wajir town is not simply another settlement. It is the place where many of the county's major administrative, commercial, political, educational, financial, and social activities are concentrated. Government offices, businesses, banks, nonprofit organizations, transport services, educational institutions, and other service providers naturally tend to establish themselves where there is a larger concentration of population and economic activity. Once these institutions become concentrated in one location, they can attract even more economic activity and employment. This creates a cycle in which the center becomes increasingly important while distant areas remain dependent on the center.

This process can be compared to rainfall falling on the windward side of a mountain. When rain falls repeatedly on the windward slope, vegetation can grow, settlements can expand, and economic activity can become more sustainable. On the leeward side, however, the rain shadow can create a drier environment. In the same way, when government institutions, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, financial services, and political offices are concentrated around Wajir town and surrounding windward constituencies, residents in those areas may experience a greater immediate presence of government and economic opportunity. Residents of Wajir South may have to travel much farther to reach some services, offices, markets, financial institutions, educational opportunities, or administrative centers. The comparison becomes even more powerful when considering the political leadership associated with the windward side.

The windward political structure, as described by this metaphor, benefits from a concentration of several forms of representation and political influence. The county governor is a countywide leader, but the location of the county headquarters and much of the county administration in Wajir town naturally gives the urban center significant institutional importance. The woman representative provides another countywide political voice in the National Assembly. A nominated Member of Parliament also contributes to the wider political representation associated with the county. These positions do not constitutionally belong to one side of the county, because their mandates are intended to serve the whole county or the wider national constituency. Nevertheless, from the perspective of residents, the physical and political concentration of leaders and institutions can create the perception that some communities are closer to political power than others.

Wajir South, in the leeward position, presents a different picture in this metaphor. Its principal parliamentary representation is through its elected Member of Parliament, while the Deputy Governor is another important political figure associated with the county administration. Again, the Deputy Governor serves the entire county rather than one constituency, and therefore it would be inaccurate to treat that office as constitutionally belonging exclusively to Wajir South. Nevertheless, if political offices, government institutions, and development projects are physically concentrated elsewhere, residents of Wajir South may reasonably experience the practical effects of political distance even when they have formal representation. This distinction between formal representation and practical access is extremely important. A community can be constitutionally represented and still feel politically marginalized. Representation on paper does not automatically guarantee equal access to public resources. A Member of Parliament may speak for a constituency, a governor may administer an entire county, and a national government may establish projects for the benefit of all citizens. Yet the real test of equality is whether residents can see and experience government services in their daily lives. A government that exists mainly through offices in a distant town may feel remote to a person living many kilometers away. For this reason, the debate about Wajir South should not be reduced to whether it has a political representative. The deeper question concerns whether political representation translates into roads, health facilities, schools, water systems, markets, financial services, employment opportunities, administrative offices, security services, and other forms of development.

The geographical size of Wajir South makes this issue particularly significant. If Wajir South has the largest land area among the areas being compared, distance itself becomes a development challenge. Government services designed around a centralized administrative model may work relatively well for people living close to Wajir town, but they can become expensive and difficult to access for people living in distant rural communities. A resident may need transportation simply to obtain a government document, access a financial institution, attend a medical appointment, pursue an educational opportunity, or interact with an administrative office. The cost of transportation, food, accommodation, and lost working time can turn an apparently free government service into an expensive undertaking. Population also matters.

A large population creates greater demand for schools, hospitals, water, roads, markets, security, administrative services, youth programs, employment opportunities, and social protection. If population growth is not matched by investment, communities can experience pressure on existing facilities. A health center may become overcrowded. A school may lack classrooms. Water points may be insufficient. Roads may remain difficult to use during certain seasons. Young people may have few opportunities to acquire technical skills or find employment. Women may face difficulties reaching maternal and reproductive health services. Traders may have limited access to credit and reliable markets. These problems become more serious when the communities are far from the county's administrative and commercial center.

The mountain metaphor therefore helps explain what residents may mean when they describe Wajir South as being in the shadow of the county. Being in the shadow does not necessarily mean that there is no government activity. It means that the scale, visibility, accessibility, and concentration of government and economic activity may appear smaller when compared with the windward side. A school, health center, water project, road, or administrative office may exist in Wajir South, but residents may still believe that the level of investment is insufficient compared with their population, land area, and needs. Wajir town itself provides the clearest aerial picture of the windward and leeward comparison. From the ground, the difference may not always be immediately visible. A person moving through the town may see shops, roads, government offices, banks, schools, restaurants, hotels, transport facilities, and residential neighborhoods without thinking about the larger political geography behind them. From an aerial perspective, however, the concentration of development becomes easier to imagine. The city can be seen as a central point around which political power, government administration, commerce, employment, and social services are gathered.

Political representation without wider economic development return

The historical organization of urban space also matters. Wajir town has developed through layers of historical, administrative, social, and political organization. The reference to a colonial clan-paddocked city points to the argument that historical patterns of settlement and administrative organization can continue to influence modern development. Colonial administrative systems often organized communities and territories in ways designed primarily for governance and control rather than balanced modern economic development. Even after independence, some of these patterns can remain embedded in the location of roads, government offices, markets, residential areas, and administrative boundaries. Consequently, contemporary inequality cannot always be explained simply by the decisions of one government or one political leader. It can also be connected to historical patterns that have accumulated over generations. The modern county government system was introduced to bring government closer to the people. Devolution under Kenya's constitutional order was intended to transfer important functions and resources from the national government to county governments so that local communities could participate more directly in development and public administration. In principle, devolution should reduce the distance between government and citizens. For a county as large as Wajir, however, devolution can only achieve its full purpose if county institutions themselves are distributed fairly across different areas.

If most county institutions remain concentrated in Wajir town, devolution can become physically centralized even though government authority has been constitutionally devolved from Nairobi to the county. A resident of Wajir South may therefore experience two levels of distance: distance from national institutions in Nairobi and distance from county institutions in Wajir town. This creates a paradox. Government has been brought closer to the county but may still remain far from communities located at the county's geographical edges. The same issue applies to national government institutions.

Agencies such as the Kenya Revenue Authority, financial institutions, postal services, commercial banks, and other public or quasi-public services tend to establish offices where there is sufficient economic demand. When these institutions move or concentrate around the windward urban center, they can reinforce the city's position as the county's economic capital. Such concentration may be commercially rational, but it can have unequal social consequences. Residents from distant parts of the county must travel to the center to access services that residents of Wajir town can reach within minutes.

The concentration of nonprofit organizations can create a similar pattern. Non-governmental organizations and humanitarian agencies often establish offices close to government institutions, airports, hotels, communication facilities, banks, and other logistical infrastructure. Wajir town therefore becomes attractive to organizations operating throughout the county. But the location of an organization's headquarters does not necessarily mean that its services reach every community equally. Programs may be delivered in remote areas, but the institutional presence and employment opportunities associated with the organization may remain concentrated in the urban center. This distinction between headquarters and actual service delivery is important. A nonprofit organization may say that it serves the entire county while maintaining its main office in Wajir town. The organization may send teams to Wajir South, but the permanent jobs, meetings, procurement opportunities, professional networks, and administrative interactions associated with the organization may still be concentrated in the city. Consequently, the economic benefits of the nonprofit sector can remain disproportionately urban even when program beneficiaries are geographically dispersed.

Financial institutions offer another example. Banks and other financial service providers are important to economic development because they provide savings facilities, loans, business accounts, money transfers, agricultural or livestock financing, and other services. When banking services are concentrated in the county headquarters, people living in distant communities can face barriers to participation in the formal economy. A trader may have to travel a long distance to access a bank. A pastoralist may need to arrange transportation and spend valuable time simply to conduct a financial transaction. A young entrepreneur may find it difficult to access credit because the institutions that provide financing are far away.

The result is a development pattern in which physical distance becomes an economic disadvantage. The farther a person lives from the center, the more expensive it can become to participate in the formal economy. In the mountain metaphor, the windward side receives the rain of institutional presence while the leeward side experiences the shadow of distance. The political consequences of this unequal geography can be profound. When people see government projects, offices, banks, schools, hospitals, roads, and employment opportunities concentrated in one part of the county, they may conclude that political influence is also concentrated there. Whether that conclusion is always factually correct is a separate question. What matters politically is the perception of fairness. Citizens judge government not only by budgets and official reports but also by what they see around them. This becomes particularly important during elections. Citizens vote because they expect political leaders to represent their interests and deliver development.

If a community votes overwhelmingly for a particular political party or presidential candidate but later feels that it has received fewer benefits than other areas, disappointment can become politically powerful. The reference to Wajir South as having strongly supported President William Ruto and the United Democratic Alliance, while allegedly experiencing limited development compared with other parts of the county, reflects this frustration. However, voting patterns alone cannot establish entitlement to particular government projects. Government resources are supposed to be distributed according to constitutional principles, laws, budgets, development priorities, needs, and administrative criteria rather than as political rewards for supporting a particular candidate or party.

This principle is fundamental to democratic government. Citizens should not have to vote for the ruling party to receive public services. A road should be constructed because it is needed. A hospital should be expanded because the population requires better healthcare. A school should receive classrooms because students need adequate learning space. Water infrastructure should be developed because people and livestock require reliable water. Government employment and public services should be distributed according to lawful and transparent procedures. If political loyalty becomes the informal price of development, democracy becomes weakened because citizens may feel compelled to vote strategically rather than freely. At the same time, the perception of unequal rewards can have serious political consequences even if the government did not intentionally distribute projects according to voting patterns. If communities see projects concentrated in areas that supported the ruling political establishment while areas that also supported the same establishment remain underserved, they may ask why their political loyalty did not produce visible development. This can create a feeling of betrayal. It can also generate competition between communities for government attention rather than cooperation around countywide development.

The Wajir mountain metaphor therefore raises a larger question about the meaning of equality. Equality does not necessarily mean that every ward receives exactly the same number of projects or the same amount of money. A large and remote area may require more investment per person or more investment overall because providing services there is more expensive. A densely populated area may require more schools or health facilities because more people live there. A community with severe water shortages may require a larger water investment than a community with relatively reliable water access. Fairness should therefore be based on need, population, geography, vulnerability, service gaps, and development priorities. This approach would be particularly relevant to Wajir South. If it has a very large land area, significant population, long distances between settlements, and substantial infrastructure gaps, then equal treatment may actually require additional resources rather than an identical share. Treating every part of the county identically could reproduce inequality because the cost of delivering services to remote communities is higher. True equity means providing what different communities need to reach a comparable level of access to public services. The question of roads is especially important. Roads are the veins of economic development. A good road connects pastoralists to markets, children to schools, patients to hospitals, traders to customers, farmers and livestock keepers to buyers, and communities to government services.

In a county characterized by long distances and dispersed settlements, road infrastructure has an even greater importance. When roads are poor, the leeward side becomes even more isolated from the windward center. When roads improve, the shadow begins to disappear because people can move more easily between the two sides. Water is equally important. In an arid and semi-arid county, water is not merely a social service; it is an economic foundation. Livestock depend on water, households depend on water, schools depend on water, and health facilities cannot operate effectively without reliable water. Water infrastructure can therefore transform entire communities. Boreholes, water pans, pipelines, storage facilities, and other systems can reduce the distance between people and the basic resource upon which their lives depend. For Wajir South, equitable water investment could be one of the most effective ways of reducing the practical disadvantages created by geographical distance.

Health services provide another measure of whether the windward-leeward divide is narrowing. A resident should not have to travel extreme distances for basic medical care. Maternal healthcare, emergency treatment, child health, disease prevention, mental health services, disability services, and medicine should be accessible as close to communities as possible. Health facilities must also have trained personnel, equipment, medicines, electricity, water, communication, and reliable referral systems. Constructing a building without adequately staffing and equipping it does not eliminate the service gap. Education is another major indicator. Young people in Wajir South should have opportunities comparable to those available elsewhere in the county. Schools require teachers, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, digital technology, sanitation facilities, water, and learning materials. Secondary and technical education are particularly important because young people need skills that can connect them to employment and entrepreneurship. If opportunities are concentrated around Wajir town, young people from remote communities may be forced to migrate or remain economically excluded.

Economic development should also be decentralized. Government can support the creation of markets, livestock centers, cooperative societies, youth enterprises, women's businesses, vocational training centers, digital services, agricultural and livestock value chains, and small-business financing in remote areas. Instead of requiring everyone to travel to Wajir town, economic infrastructure can be developed closer to the communities that produce goods and services. A pastoralist should not have to move livestock over long distances simply to access a market. A young entrepreneur should not have to relocate to the county headquarters to find basic business services. Digital government provides an opportunity to reduce some of these geographical inequalities.

Online government services, mobile banking, digital identification, electronic applications, remote learning, telemedicine, and digital communication can reduce the importance of physical distance. However, digital development requires reliable electricity, mobile networks, internet access, affordable devices, and digital literacy. Without these foundations, digital government may benefit the windward side more than the leeward side because the people already closest to infrastructure will be the first to take advantage of new technology.

The future of Wajir County should therefore not be understood as a struggle between one side and another. The windward and leeward metaphor is useful precisely because it exposes the danger of allowing geographical differences to become permanent political differences. A county cannot develop sustainably when one part becomes increasingly connected while another part remains isolated.

The economic success of Wajir town should ultimately benefit the entire county. Likewise, development in Wajir South should contribute to the economic strength of Wajir County as a whole. There is also a need to distinguish between the location of government headquarters and the distribution of government services. It may be reasonable for some countywide administrative offices to remain in Wajir town because of infrastructure, transportation, staffing, and operational requirements. But satellite offices can be established in other parts of the county. Certain services can be decentralized to constituency or ward level. Mobile government service centers can periodically visit remote communities. Government agencies can establish outreach programs. Financial institutions can use mobile banking and agency banking. Nonprofit organizations can maintain field offices rather than concentrating all staff in the county headquarters. The relocation or decentralization of selected institutions could have a significant economic effect. When an office moves into a remote area, it does more than provide a service. It creates jobs, attracts supporting businesses, increases demand for housing and transportation, encourages commercial activity, and brings professionals into the community. A government office can therefore become an anchor for local economic development.

If every important institution is located in Wajir town, the economic multiplier effect remains concentrated there. The same principle applies to public procurement. County and national government institutions purchase goods and services every day. If procurement opportunities are accessible mainly to businesses in Wajir town, businesses in distant areas remain weak. Transparent procurement systems can deliberately increase opportunities for qualified local enterprises throughout the county. Women, youth, persons with disabilities, cooperatives, livestock producers, transport providers, construction firms, and small businesses should have meaningful opportunities to participate in government-funded economic activity.

Political leaders also have an important role in changing the windward-leeward pattern. Members of Parliament, Members of the County Assembly, the governor, deputy governor, woman representative, senators, national government administrators, and other leaders should work together rather than treating development as a competition among political camps. Their responsibility is not simply to announce projects. They should monitor whether projects are completed, whether facilities are functioning, whether funds are being used properly, and whether citizens can actually access the intended services. Public participation should be strengthened as well. Residents of Wajir South and other remote areas should have opportunities to participate in county planning and budgeting without having to travel long distances to Wajir town. Public participation forums can be organized locally. Community representatives can be trained to understand budgets and development plans.

Citizens can monitor projects and report incomplete or poor-quality work. Information about county budgets should be available in accessible language so that ordinary residents can understand how resources are allocated. Transparency is essential because perceptions of favoritism become stronger when information is difficult to obtain. If residents can clearly see how much money has been allocated to each ward, what projects are planned, how much each project costs, who is responsible for implementation, and when the project should be completed, they can judge government performance using evidence rather than rumors. Transparency can therefore reduce political suspicion even when resources are not equally distributed.

The county also needs a development philosophy that recognizes its geographical realities. Wajir cannot be governed as though all communities are located within a few kilometers of the county headquarters. A county of great size requires multiple centers of service delivery. Wajir town should remain an important administrative and commercial center, but it should not become the only center of development. Secondary urban centers and strategic service points should be strengthened so that residents can access essential services without always traveling to the county capital. The windward-leeward comparison also highlights the importance of psychological geography. Physical distance can produce psychological distance. When people repeatedly travel to another part of the county to access government services, they may begin to feel that the government belongs to someone else. They may see the county headquarters as a place where decisions are made about them rather than with them. This is dangerous because citizenship depends not only on legal rights but also on a sense of belonging and participation.

For Wajir South, the challenge is therefore not merely to demand more projects. The deeper challenge is to demand an institutional presence that makes residents feel that they are fully part of the county's political and economic life. A road is important, but so is a government office. A hospital is important, but so is the presence of trained professionals. A water project is important, but so is the ability of communities to participate in managing it. A political representative is important, but so is an effective mechanism through which citizens can communicate their needs and monitor government performance. The windward side should not be portrayed as an enemy. Wajir town and the communities around it are also entitled to development. Urban residents have legitimate needs for roads, housing, drainage, healthcare, education, employment, security, and business opportunities. The problem begins when the success of the center becomes dependent upon the neglect of the periphery. A strong county center should function as an engine that pulls the entire county forward rather than as a magnet that absorbs resources from distant communities.

The ideal future is therefore not to destroy the windward side but to eliminate the permanent leeward shadow. Wajir town can remain the county's administrative capital while Wajir South and other remote areas develop their own strong service and economic centers. Government offices can be distributed according to function. Roads can connect communities to markets. Health and education services can be brought closer to people. Financial services can be decentralized. Nonprofit organizations can strengthen field operations.

Youth can receive skills and employment opportunities locally. Women can access economic and social programs without traveling long distances. Pastoralists can access livestock markets and veterinary services closer to their communities. Such a transformation would also strengthen political unity. When citizens see that development is distributed according to need rather than political favoritism, electoral competition becomes less threatening. People can support whichever political party they prefer without fearing that their communities will be punished for their political choices. A democratic government should be strong enough to serve citizens regardless of how they vote.

The reference to Wajir South as a community that supported President Ruto and UDA but nevertheless feels underserved illustrates the larger principle that political support should not be treated as a transaction. Citizens vote for political leaders for many reasons, including ideology, leadership, identity, promises, development expectations, national interests, and personal conviction. Once an election is over, the government has a responsibility to serve everyone. If a community supported the winning candidate, it should not have to prove its loyalty again to receive services. If a community supported the losing candidate, it should not be punished. This is the foundation of equal citizenship. Ultimately, the windward and leeward mountain metaphor is a way of describing inequality in access, visibility, opportunity, and institutional presence. It should not be interpreted as proof that every project in Wajir County is deliberately directed toward one side or that every institution located in Wajir town represents political favoritism. Some concentration is a natural consequence of urbanization, administrative efficiency, population density, infrastructure, and economic demand. Nevertheless, when the same geographic pattern is repeated across government offices, financial institutions, nonprofit organizations, employment opportunities, education, health services, roads, markets, and political visibility, it becomes reasonable for citizens to ask whether the county has developed an unintended center-periphery imbalance.

Wajir South, because of its geographical size, population, distance, and development challenges, deserves serious attention within any countywide development strategy. Its needs should be measured systematically rather than politically. The county government and national government should compare population, land area, poverty, road coverage, school infrastructure, health facilities, water access, employment, financial services, electricity, internet access, markets, and other indicators across constituencies and wards. Such a comparison would make it possible to identify where the greatest gaps exist and direct resources accordingly. A fair development model would not necessarily give Wajir South everything it asks for, nor would it take everything away from Wajir town. Instead, it would establish objective standards for equitable service delivery. Every community should have reasonable access to basic healthcare, education, clean water, roads, security, administrative services, economic opportunities, and communication infrastructure. Where geography makes service delivery more expensive, budgets should recognize that additional cost. Where population creates greater demand, investment should respond to that demand. Where poverty and vulnerability are higher, social protection and development programs should be strengthened. The mountain image ultimately offers a warning and a possibility.

The warning is that if government resources, political influence, businesses, nonprofit institutions, and social services continue to concentrate around the windward center, the leeward communities may become increasingly marginalized. The possibility is that deliberate decentralization can change the pattern. Roads can cross the shadow. Water can reach the dry side. Government offices can move closer to citizens. Banks can expand their networks. Schools and hospitals can become stronger. Markets can develop. Digital technology can connect remote communities. Political leaders can cooperate across constituencies. County budgets can be guided by measurable need rather than political proximity.

Aerially, Wajir County may appear as one political and geographical unit. On the ground, however, people experience the county differently. Someone living close to Wajir town may have immediate access to offices, banks, hospitals, schools, businesses, hotels, nonprofit organizations, transportation, and political institutions. Someone living far away in Wajir South may experience the same county through distance, limited infrastructure, transportation costs, fewer institutions, and reduced economic opportunity. The legal map says that both residents belong to the same county. Their daily experiences may nevertheless be very different. The true test of devolution is whether these differences are gradually reduced. The true test of political representation is whether citizens can see their needs reflected in public decisions. The true test of government development is not the number of projects announced but the number of functioning services people can actually use. And the true test of equality is not whether every community receives exactly the same thing, but whether every citizen has a fair opportunity to live, work, learn, trade, receive healthcare, access government, and participate in the political and economic life of the county.

Wajir County therefore needs a development approach that sees beyond the windward and leeward divide. Wajir North, Wajir East, Wajir Central, Tarbaj, Eldas, and Wajir South should not be competing mountains. They should be parts of one landscape. Wajir town should not be a destination that every resident must depend upon for basic services. It should be a central engine connected to a network of strong communities throughout the county. Wajir South should not remain a leeward shadow. Its size, population, distance, resources, and development needs should become reasons for stronger investment rather than reasons for continued marginalization. The most important lesson from the windward and leeward comparison is that political equality must eventually become visible in everyday life. It must be visible in the location of government offices, the quality of roads, the availability of water, the strength of schools, the accessibility of healthcare, the presence of financial institutions, the growth of businesses, the availability of employment, the reach of nonprofit services, and the opportunities available to young people. It must also be visible in the confidence of citizens that their government sees them, hears them, and values them.

A county cannot be considered fully developed when its capital grows while its distant communities remain in the shadow. Development must move beyond the center. Government must travel beyond the headquarters. Economic opportunity must travel beyond the city. Social services must travel beyond the administrative boundaries of the urban core. Political attention must travel beyond election periods. When this happens, the mountain metaphor changes. The windward side remains productive, but the leeward side is no longer forgotten.

Instead of one side receiving the rain and another remaining permanently dry, the entire county becomes connected by roads, institutions, services, markets, political participation, and shared economic opportunity. The future of Wajir County should therefore be measured not by how powerful its center becomes, but by how effectively that center connects with and strengthens every part of the county. Wajir town can remain the heart of Wajir, but Wajir South and the other distant communities must have strong arteries connecting them to that heart. Political leadership must become countywide in practice as well as in law. Government resources must follow need. Social services must follow population. Infrastructure must follow distance and development gaps. Economic opportunities must follow communities rather than remain permanently concentrated in the capital.

In that sense, the windward and leeward mountain is not simply a description of the present. It can also become a call for change. The windward side represents political visibility, government presence, economic concentration, and institutional advantage. The leeward side represents distance, limited access, underdevelopment, and the feeling of being forgotten. The challenge for Wajir County is to ensure that this difference does not become permanent. The goal should be a county in which geography does not determine the quality of citizenship, political support does not determine access to development, and living far from Wajir town does not mean living far from government. Wajir County belongs equally to the people of Wajir North, Wajir East, Wajir Central, Tarbaj, Eldas, and Wajir South. Its resources, political institutions, public services, and development opportunities should ultimately reflect that shared ownership. The windward side may have the advantage of proximity, institutions, and political visibility, but the leeward side must not be left permanently in its shadow.

A fair county is one in which the benefits of government reach the entire landscape, from the center to the most distant settlement, so that every resident can look at Wajir not as a mountain divided between those who receive the rain and those who live in the shadow, but as one county whose future belongs equally to all its people.

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