Turning our world around—with women in the lead

An Ethiopian proverb says, “Where a woman rules, streams run uphill.” How disturbing... and how exciting! Streams should not run uphill, should they? That would mean turning the world on its head and going against the law of gravity, writes sought-after Leadership Coach, Dr Layo Seriki.

This must be magic, dangerous and hard, therefore, better not be allowed. But hang on for a moment. Before we jump to the conclusion that this proverb must be telling us that women should definitely never lead, let’s think about some of the magic mankind has created, lives with and benefits from already.

For example, it has become normal for many human beings to sit calmly in a huge metal container 10 000 metres above the ground, reading a newspaper and sipping on a glass of wine or cup of tea. You could say that this is not due to magic at all but rather due to the ability of mankind to oppose the force of gravity with an equally strong or stronger force. It is due to our ability to change the world we live in with our ideas and our energy.

Looking around at our world today, I see humankind (or human-not-so-kind) collectively creating a world that none of us really want. I see a world of poverty, violence, greed and corruption, where people flee their homes in search of better lives elsewhere, where human beings treat other human beings...
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Women seem to be especially good at living the type of leadership that is called for in this fast-paced, ever-changing day and age. Modern leadership thinking emphasises change management, empowerment, collaboration, diversity and ethical purpose. The majority of our male leaders appear to be struggling into mere resources, to be used in order to ultimate goal and human beings have turned the environment are destroyed. The major part of our male leaders get distracted by the need to aggressively exhibit superiority and toughness—and, thus, to prove their worthiness of the alpha male position.

Dr Layo Seriki

According to Heide Goettner-Abendroth, founder of the International Academy HAGA for Modern Matriarchal Studies, cited by Dame Magazine in 2013, matriarchies are not the exact opposite of parrichies. This would mean that, now, the women are the bosses and the men are the oppressed. She explains that “in matriarchies, mothers are at the centre of culture without ruling over other members of society” and that “the aim is not to have power over others and over nature, but to follow maternal values, i.e.

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