

# Challenges for Women in Corporate Governance in Jordan



**Majd Shweikeh – CEO Orange Mobile Jordan**

**19<sup>th</sup> October 2009**



*“Because I am a woman I must make unusual efforts to succeed. If I fail, no one will say, “She doesn't have what it takes.” They will say, “Women don't have what it takes.”*”

Clare Boothe Luce,  
American Playwright, editor and  
congresswoman

## Background – Women’s Challenges faced in workplace

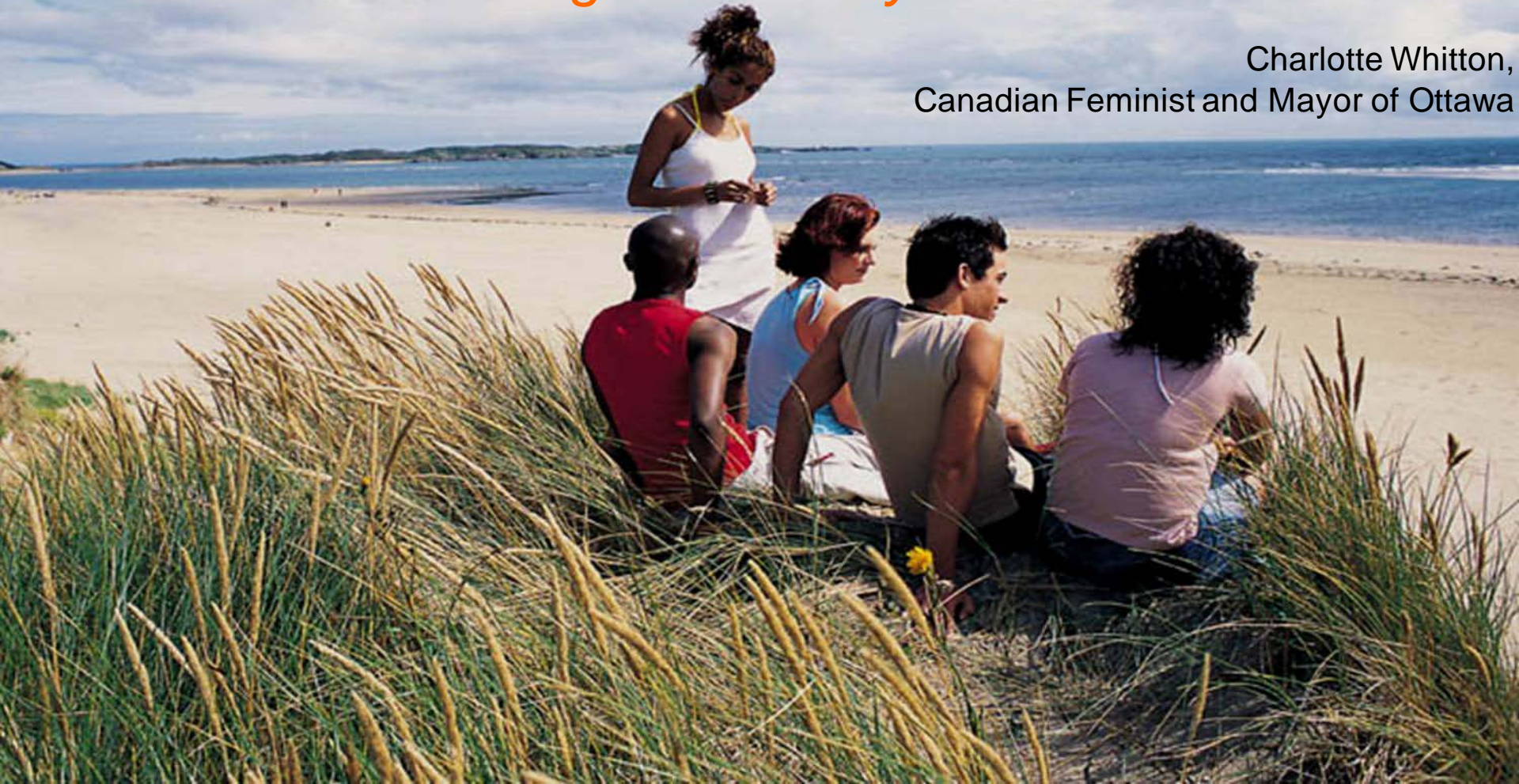
- Imbalance between work and life
- A male-dominated public industry and environment
- Social & cultural discrimination – negative perceptions of women in management roles
- Unhealthy competition amongst women in business
- Women under-estimate their full potential

# Women in Leadership - The Expectations

- Work twice as hard as any man to prove that you can deliver excellent results
- Be more transparent and ethical in business conduct
- Only wear one hat... Not perceived as a businesswoman AND a mother/wife/grandmother etc
- Adapt to existing business environment
- Women in leadership are bound to FAIL!

*“Whatever women do they must do twice  
as well as men to be thought of half as  
good. Luckily this is not difficult”*

Charlotte Whitton,  
Canadian Feminist and Mayor of Ottawa





# Women and Corporate Governance

# Integrity and transparency

*Women are Corporate Governance enablers; more inclined for ethical conduct and integrity*

- Women are less likely to condone corruption according to studies
- Countries that have greater representation of women in Govt have lower level of corruption
- Women Managers are less involved in bribery act
- During the judiciary upgrade strategy in 2003; increasing the number of women was a key pillar to increase transparency and accountability
- SSIU created a very transparent process for selecting Board of Directors representatives including women based on merits

# Commitment to the Organization

*A psychological attachment and the ability to experience a 'sense of oneness' with the organization*

- Personal sacrifices made by women to achieve success in business results in strong commitment
- Commitment by a company to invest in women results to commitment from the women to remain loyal to the company

# Responsibility and Accountability

*With well defined strategic goals and objectives; women shall assume their responsibilities towards achieving these objectives, hence, shall be evaluated based on results*

- Performance-based Management (Orange is an example)
- Holding other women accountable should not be mistaken with rivalry – testimony females can work together
- Firms operating in complex environments do generate positive results when they have a high proportion of women officers

A group of people are silhouetted against a bright sunset over a body of water. They are captured in mid-air, jumping and celebrating joyfully. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare and reflecting on the water. The overall mood is one of happiness and achievement.

*“The diversity  
management  
movement embraces  
the notion that gender  
and ethnic diversity  
can serve corporate  
ends and enhance the  
bottom line”*

*\*Avery Gordon, The Work of Corporate  
Culture: Diversity Management*

# Participation

*Is there enough governance be it at National level or at Corporate levels to create an environment more inclusive of Women's voice ?*

- Orange is pioneer in women empowerment. Three ladies at the executive committee and one female at the BOD
- Gender equality is a priority at France Telecom –Received The Equality in The Workplace label in 2005
- Reform leaders recognize the importance of increasing the women's participation in public service – by laws of the Econ and Social Council to include 8 women

# Participation

2008 Percentage of Females in Employment	
Global Average	40%
Jordan	14.2% (YTD 16%)
Orange Jordan	25%

2008 Percentage of Women on Board of Directors	
Globally (all companies in the Fortune 500)	14.8%
Regionally	1.5%

2008 Percentage of Female Graduates in Jordan	
University Graduates	52%
Community College Graduates	66%

- A clear gap is evident in Jordan between female economic participation and increased levels of education among females.... Why?

Sources: Jordanian Ministry of Labor, Jordanian Department of Statistics and 2008 CWDI Report

*“The thing women have yet to learn is nobody gives you power, you just take it”*

**Roseanne Barr,**  
American  
actress and  
comedienne





# Thanks

**Contact Details:**

**Majd Shweikeh**

**CEO Orange Mobile, Jordan Telecom  
Group**

**Orange Jordan – P.O. Box 1689 –  
11118 Amman – Jordan**

**C: +962 776 598200**

**@: majd.shweikeh@orange-jtg.jo**