

**Snezana S. Green**

**THE CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MOVEMENT IN SERBIA:**

**MEDIA & PUBLIC INTEREST**

*Belgrade, summer 2008*

*Table of Contents*

<b><u>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS PUBLICATION</u></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><u>INTRODUCTION</u></b>	<b>4</b>
<b><u>THE CONCEPT OF CSR</u></b>	<b>4</b>
<b><u>THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIA</u></b>	<b>9</b>
<b>BUSINESS LEADERS INITIATIVE ON HUMAN RIGHTS: MTV NETWORKS EUROPE EXAMPLE</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>CSR ACTIVITIES OF ANEM MEMBERS: EXAMPLE OF RTV B92</b>	<b>12</b>
<b><u>CONCLUSION</u></b>	<b>17</b>
<b><u>WEBSITE AND ORGANIZATIONS MENTIONED IN THIS PUBLICATION</u></b>	<b>21</b>

*List of Abbreviations Used in this Publication*

ANEM	Association of Independent Electronic Media
BLF	Business Leaders Forum
BLIHR	Business Leaders Initiative for Human Rights
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ILO Declaration	International Labor Organization's Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy
MTV	MTV Networks Europe
Norms	Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with regard to Human Rights
OECDG	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RTV B92	Radio and Television station B92
SMEs	Small and Medium Size Enterprises
SRSG	Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Business & Human Rights
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization

## **Introduction**

The first ever survey on the state of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Serbia conducted in 2005 showed insufficient awareness of the importance of CSR which is considered the chief obstacle for a greater CSR initiative in Serbia.<sup>1</sup> Despite this, there are significant examples that fall under the category of socially responsible behavior by companies, in particular those concerning performance of the media affiliated in the Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM) during the 1990s and afterwards.

The aim of this publication is to accumulate and disseminate valuable information on the concept of CSR and also to introduce the latest trends on human rights responsibilities of non-state actors, including businesses. The publication is intended as a learning document: it informs the reader of the specificity of the CSR issue of the media having a double role towards its stakeholders, that of a broadcaster and of a company. The publication provides for information on best practices in respect of the media CSR by using the example of MTV Networks Europe. The paper informs on CSR activities of RTV B92, member and one of the founders of the ANEM, as it is the most engaged media company in promoting CSR in Serbia and a media company whose CSR activities date back to the time of the highest repression of the media. Finally, the publication aims to raise awareness on CSR issues and contribute to the spill-over of positive practices to predominantly small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) gathered in ANEM.<sup>2</sup>

## **The Concept of CSR**

There is no universally accepted definition of CSR and many sectors have their own perception and understanding of what CSR entails. The European Commission defines CSR as ‘a concept

---

<sup>1</sup> --, Corporate Social Responsibility in Serbia, Attitudes of the General Public, Profit, Non-Profit and Public-Sector Leaders in Serbia Towards the Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (Responsible Business Initiative Serbia 2005) [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/soc-dial/csr/060220\\_serbia.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/soc-dial/csr/060220_serbia.pdf) > (hereinafter RBI Serbia 2005)

<sup>2</sup> A detailed research on CSR activities of ANEM members, aside from RTV B92, is outside of the scope of this publication.

whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis'.<sup>3</sup> The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) places great emphasis on a 'Triple-Bottom-Line-Approach', where CSR is generally understood as being the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives.<sup>4</sup> The UNIDO approach draws an important distinction between CSR as a strategic business management concept, on one hand, and charity, sponsorships or philanthropy on the other.<sup>5</sup>

Human rights organizations and activists understand the spectrum of values related to the concept of CSR from the perspective of human rights law principles and standards. A joint publication of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Business Leaders Initiative for Human Rights (BLIHR), directs companies to 'familiarize themselves with the broad content of human rights' and 'to realize that all human rights are relevant to the business'.<sup>6</sup> The 2005 Report of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights (hereinafter 2005 UN Report) notes that 'initiatives and standards relevant to corporate social responsibility' have increased rapidly over the last 15 years and that there are over 200 existing initiatives and standards, among which:

- International instruments - such as treaties and declarations directed at states and of relevance to business, or instruments directed specifically at business, like the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (OECDG) and the International Labor Organization's Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (ILO Declaration);

---

<sup>3</sup> --, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee (European Commission, 2006) COM (2006) 136 fin <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0136:FIN:EN:PDF>

<sup>4</sup> --. What is CSR? Defining the Concept. (UNIDO) <<http://www.unido.org/index.php?id=o72054>>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> The document directs businesses to look first to what is often referred to as the 'International Bill of Human Rights' made up of three international agreements: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' and provides for a description of the rights contained in these human rights instruments. --, A Guide for Integrating Human Rights into Business Management (UNGC, OHRHR, BLIHR) <<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuideHRBusinessen.pdf>>

- Nationally based standards - such as constitutional provisions, national laws and national regulations of relevance to business activities, like the United States Alien Tort Claims Act (which also has extraterritorial effect);
- Certification schemes - such as the SA8000 certification scheme and the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme;
- Voluntary initiatives - codes of conduct, directives, policies, third-party and self-reporting initiatives adopted by business on a voluntary basis, the UNGC initiative,<sup>7</sup> backed by the UN, being one of them;
- Mainstream financial indices – sets of social and environmental indices based on objective criteria against which companies are monitored as a means of changing the nature of business activities through investors and markets, such as the FTSE4Good Index;
- Tools, meetings and other initiatives – ‘which seek to promote greater understanding of and respect for human rights in a variety of forms’ including methodologies for undertaking human rights impact assessments, management tools, multi-stakeholder consultations, etc., such as BLIHR initiative.<sup>8</sup>

The Report notes four initiatives to be ‘particularly relevant’ to the UN Commission on Human Rights’ (now the UN Human Rights Council) work in the area of CSR, including the above-listed OECDG, ILO Declaration and the UNGC Initiative.<sup>9</sup> The OECDG are recommendations to businesses by more than 30 OECD member states concerning conduct in many areas of business ethics, such as compliance with local laws and regulations, safeguarding of consumer interests, abstaining from anti-competitive practices and respect for the human rights. While essentially promotional in character, in terms of legal status, the OECD Guidelines are purely voluntary recommendations to businesses; however adhering States are committed to promoting them.<sup>10</sup> The ILO Declaration provides guidance to multinational enterprises as well as to domestic

---

<sup>7</sup> Report of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights on the responsibilities of transnational corporations and related business enterprises with regard to human rights (adopted on 15 February 2005) UN Doc. No. E/CN.4/2005/91 (hereinafter 2005 UN Report) item 15

<sup>8</sup> 2005 UN Report) item 7

<sup>9</sup> 2005 UN Report, item 10

<sup>10</sup> 2005 UN Report, item 11-13

business, governments and workers' organizations on labor-related aspects of corporate social responsibility - it does not cover other areas of human rights. The ILO Tripartite Declaration is voluntary for business, but binding on States that are parties to the declaration.<sup>11</sup> The UNGC is the world's largest corporate citizenship initiative introduced by the UN Secretary General in 1999. It promotes ten principles in the area of human rights, labor standards, environment and anti-corruption. It is voluntary for businesses, although the internationally proclaimed human rights it refers to are generally binding on States.<sup>12</sup>

The fourth document is a draft Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with regard to Human Rights (Norms), which is the first document at the international level that acknowledges explicitly the direct responsibility of businesses with regard to human rights.<sup>13</sup> The Norms appear to be more comprehensive document than any other initiative and/or standards – while the previously listed initiatives, the OECDG, ILO Declaration and the UNGC treat human rights in relation to the overall objectives and scope in each initiative the Norms focus on a comprehensive set of human rights, including that of the right of security of persons, freedom of movement and respect for economic, social and cultural rights.<sup>14</sup>

The Norms envisage a range of implementation mechanisms of both a promotional and protective character such as self-reporting and external verification. For example, the non-voluntary nature of the Norms creates a mechanism to submit information about businesses which are not meeting the minimum standards of the Norms.<sup>15</sup> The document is consequently welcomed by scholars and others who work in the field of corporate social responsibility, in particular of NGOs who would like to use the Norms to begin holding large businesses accountable for their human rights

---

<sup>11</sup> 2005 UN Report, item 14

<sup>12</sup> 2005 UN Report, item 15

<sup>13</sup> UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (13 August 2003) E/CN.4/Sub.2/2003/12/Rev.2  
<[http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.Sub.2.2003.12.Rev.2.En](http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.Sub.2.2003.12.Rev.2.En)> (hereinafter Norms)

<sup>14</sup> 2005 UN Report, item 17; D Weissbrodt and M Kruger, 'Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights' (2003) 97 Am. J. Int'l L.901 (hereinafter Weissbrodt and Kruger)

<sup>15</sup> Weissbrodt and Kruger

violations.<sup>16</sup> The main argument used by the proponents of the Norms is that ‘(w)ith the power should come responsibility’, and that international human rights law needs to focus adequately on businesses as these are extremely potent international non-state actors.<sup>17</sup> As the UN consultation process revealed a wide range of opposing opinions amongst stakeholders on the value and content of the draft, the Norms have not been adopted as a binding document.<sup>18</sup>

However, as for the significance of the debate a special UN mechanism has been formed in 2005 - Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Business & Human Rights (SRSG).<sup>19</sup> Reputable international NGOs and other organizations have been critical on the scope of the mechanism; one of the latest joint statements made by organizations such as Amnesty International was to urge the Human Rights Council to broaden the focus of the mechanism to go beyond the elaboration of the “protect, respect, and remedy” framework, and to include an explicit capacity to examine situations of corporate abuse, as ‘to date the mandate has placed relatively little emphasis on the means of holding companies, including those that operate trans-nationally, to account.’<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> 2005 UN Report, item 18-19. Items 20 and 21 offer summary of the main argument both against and in favour of the draft Norms.

The Norms are considered ‘soft law’ document, capable of becoming binding law instrument, Weissbrodt and Kruger

<sup>19</sup> Among others, the mechanism’s mandate is to identify and clarify standards of corporate responsibility and accountability for businesses with regard to human rights and to research concepts such as ‘complicity and ‘sphere of influence’. Human Rights Resolution 2005/69 (adopted on 20 May 2005) UN Doc. No. E/CN.4/2005/L.10/Add.17 <[http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/CHR/resolutions/E-CN\\_4-RES-2005-69.doc](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/CHR/resolutions/E-CN_4-RES-2005-69.doc)>

For more information on SRSG please visit <<http://www.business-humanrights.org/Gettingstarted/UNSpecialRepresentative>>

<sup>20</sup> --, Joint NGO Statement to the Eighth Session of the Human Rights Council (Action Aid, Amnesty International, EarthRights International and others, May 2008) <<http://hrw.org/english/docs/2008/05/20/global18884.htm>>

## **The Social Responsibility of Media**

To fully understand the concept of CSR, one needs to understand the interrelated concept of a company's 'sphere of influence' on its stakeholders. "Every company, both large and small, has a sphere of influence, though obviously the larger and more strategically significant the company, the larger the company's sphere of influence is likely to be."<sup>21</sup> The UNGC explains that 'understanding your company's sphere of influence can be accomplished by mapping the stakeholder groups affected by your business operations, and that a key stakeholder group that will normally lie at the centre of any company's sphere of influence will be employees, while other groups (business partners, suppliers, local communities, and customers) will follow, having government and the wider society as the final group of stakeholders.'<sup>22</sup> The Norms are also taking a flexible approach in holding the businesses responsible within their respective 'spheres of activity and influence', without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the states regarding human rights.<sup>23</sup>

In understanding the 'sphere of influence' of the media companies it is important to realize that the media industry has considerable influence as a broadcaster, aside from its influence as a company. Because of its fundamental role to serve public interest, media companies should be socially responsible enterprise by definition. However, as any company is capable of exerting both positive and negative influence in fostering human development, so is media company. The impact and scope of such influence is familiar to us: on one side we had all witnessed the crucial role independent media gathered in ANEM had played during the 1990s, headed by the association's flagship RTV B92, then Radio B92, for which it was considered by many at the

---

<sup>21</sup> --, 'A Guide for Integrating Human Rights Principles into Business Management – a consultation draft' (Business Leaders Initiative for Human Rights, United Nations Global Compact, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) < <http://www.businessinsociety.eu/resources/1935>> (hereinafter BLIHR/UNGC/OHCHR Guide) page 8

<sup>22</sup> BLIHR/UNGC/OHCHR Guide, page 8. The Global Compact developed a model to visualize the sphere of influence, for more information please see: Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Issue of Human Rights and Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises, Clarifying the Concepts of "Sphere of influence" and "Complicity" (15 May 2008) UN Doc. No. A/HRC/8/16

<sup>23</sup> The Norms, item A.1; Weissbrodt and Kruger

time to be a true example of a public service broadcaster. On the other hand, we all remember the power of information manipulation performed by state-run media in Serbia during the 1990s.

The complete absence of media action may hamper the fulfillment of human rights as well, including that of the most vulnerable of our societies, women, children, etc. It is however highly debatable to what extent it is the media's responsibility to cover all human rights stories, and in particular how much of this duty is bestowed on commercial media.<sup>24</sup> Regardless of it being public or private, there are minimum human rights standards that are subject even to media specific instruments,<sup>25</sup> and that is where mapping of media as a broadcaster's sphere of influence should begin.<sup>26</sup> Let us now turn to the examples of MTV and RTV B92 in order to provide for more details on the specificity of media CSR.

### **Business Leaders Initiative on Human Rights: MTV Networks Europe Example**

The media industry as a whole has been considered 'something of a latecomer to the corporate responsibility arena'.<sup>27</sup> One of the positive examples is the MTV Networks Europe (MTV); MTV has been representing the media and entertainment industry in the BLIHR initiative, which has been "road-testing" the draft Norms. The objective of this initiative is to demonstrate ways in which to implement human rights as well as to find methods of applying the content of the Norms

---

<sup>24</sup> Consider for example: --, Journalism, Media and Challenge to Human Rights Reporting (International Council on Human Rights, 2002) <[http://www.ichrp.org/files/summaries/22/106\\_-\\_The\\_Media\\_and\\_Human\\_Rights\\_-\\_English\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.ichrp.org/files/summaries/22/106_-_The_Media_and_Human_Rights_-_English_Summary.pdf)>

<sup>25</sup> Consider for example article 7 of the The Revised European Convention on Transfrontier Television and its Explanatory Report (Strasbourg, 2003) CoE T-TT(2000)008 at para.33 and 156 [hereinafter ECTT Explanatory Report]

<sup>26</sup> --, Questions and Answers: What is our position on the Draft UN Norms? (BLIHR) <<http://www.blihr.org/>>

<sup>27</sup> On this issue consider: --, Welcome to the Green Supplement (Media Week Special) <http://green.mediaweek.co.uk/>. The source provide for information that in the UK, the media sector - with the exception of BSkyB, the first media company to declare itself carbon neutral in 2006 - has arguably been slower than other industries to adopt environmentally friendly policies into everyday practice. The source provides useful information such as, for example, information on carbon footprint for a typical media campaign where total carbon footprint of one TV campaign equivalent to the carbon emissions produced by 2.8 people in a year . --, How green is your medium? (Green Supplement) <<http://green.mediaweek.co.uk/media.aspx>>

by defining what is ‘essential’, ‘expected’ and ‘desirable’ behavior for all companies.<sup>28</sup>

Companies affiliated in the BLIHR initiative believe that voluntary and mandatory approaches to CSR are not mutually exclusive but complementary ‘since voluntary approaches are designed to raise the bar whereas the starting position for mandatory approaches is the legally enforceable minimum’.<sup>29</sup>

Going beyond the mere adherence to statutory obligations, the BLIHR review considered the two main aspects of MTV’s corporate responsibility: a) as a broadcaster for the channel content that it disseminates set in the context of its relationships with the rest of the music and broadcasting industry and with OFCOM, the UK’s communications regulator, and b) as a company which like any other has relationships with employees, suppliers and partners and the local community.<sup>30</sup> MTV divides its responsibilities as a broadcaster further into the ‘non-negotiable’ responsibilities that are ‘minimum within which all broadcasters must operate’,<sup>31</sup> ‘the expected’ responsibilities where MTV’s editorial policy requires ongoing interrogation and refinement having in mind that its main audience is youth,<sup>32</sup> and a ‘leadership’ sphere of influence where MTV has continuous production and broadcast programming examining a variety of critical social issues, including prostitution, people with HIV/AIDS, crime, youth violence, etc.<sup>33</sup> Regarding its responsibilities as a company, MTV undertook a strategic review, a mapping of MTVN UK & Ireland’s policies and practice against the Norms, and this activity flagged a number of areas for further investigation (including labor practices where catering, security and other office services are outsourced or employment of a youthful workforce).<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> 2005 UN Report, item 22

<sup>29</sup> --, Questions and Answers: What is our position on mandatory vs. voluntary approaches? (BLIHR) <<http://www.blihr.org/>>

<sup>30</sup> BLIHR Report no. 2, page 36

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> Ibid

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> BLIHR Report no.2, page 37

There are numerous practices that MTV is introducing in recognition of its corporate responsibility towards society at large, such as the MTV's partnership with the civil society sector, the company's work within the Media CSR Forum, a London based organization that is made up of more than 15 media organizations committed to furthering corporate social responsibility in the media sector,<sup>35</sup> and above all, the company's work in developing a Code of Editorial Conduct, which would be one of the first in the industry to be based on human rights values.<sup>36</sup>

### **CSR activities of ANEM members: example of RTV B92**

The very first organized event on the topic of CSR in Serbia was a conference organized jointly by UNIDO, the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and Smart Kolektiv in 2007; the aim of the conference was, among others, to provide up-to-date information on various CSR related issues and initiatives, including that of the UNGC and its activities in Serbia.<sup>37</sup> One of the most recent moments in the CSR movement was establishment of a Serbian Business Leaders Forum (BLF) in June 2008.<sup>38</sup>

In the media sector, RTV B92 has been by far the most active company in the sphere of CSR in Serbia. RTV B92 took active part in the above mentioned events and became a member to both the UNGC and the BLF. Beginnings of corporate social responsibility activities of B92, as well as those of other ANEM media, date back to the 1990s. In 1993, Radio B92 and six other media outlets, among which current are ANEM members, Radio Boom 93, Pozarevac, Radio Bajina Basta and Radio Kragujevac, founded the ANEM with the goal of uniting existing isolated

---

<sup>35</sup> BLIHR Report no.2, page 39. For more information on Media CSR Forum, please visit their website at: <<http://www.mediacsforum.org/who.jsp>>

<sup>36</sup> BLIHR/UNGC/OHCHR Guide, page 25

<sup>37</sup> --, Development of Corporate Social Responsibility in Central and Eastern Europe (UNIDO Website) <[http://www.unido.org/fileadmin/media/images/resized/Private\\_Sector\\_CSR/csr\\_Development\\_of\\_Corporate\\_Social\\_Responsibility\\_in\\_CEE.pdf](http://www.unido.org/fileadmin/media/images/resized/Private_Sector_CSR/csr_Development_of_Corporate_Social_Responsibility_in_CEE.pdf)>

<sup>38</sup> --, Serbian Business Network for Social Responsibility (Smart Kolektiv, 2008) – on file with the author

independent media as the first step towards breaking the state-controlled media's monopoly.<sup>39</sup> Building on the political gains of the opposition parties in local elections and the 1996-97 mass civic demonstrations, ANEM launched its Radio Network with 19 affiliated independent local stations across the county in 1997, increasing network impact and coverage dramatically.<sup>40</sup> By 1998, the ANEM Radio Network had expanded to include 35 stations and had built a collective audience reach of 1.6 million - rivaling for the first time state-controlled Radio Belgrade.<sup>41</sup>

The media scene in Serbia during the 1990s was marked by extreme government repression on independent media which culminated during 1998 and 1999 when the Government was banning or taking over a number of media.<sup>42</sup> ANEM's flagship, Radio B92, was banned four times during the dictatorship regime. Despite this, B92's crew has found other alternative ways to get back on the air to continue to independently and objectively inform its audience, as the station was almost the only source of reliable information at the time, and to cease with broadcasting would have incomprehensible negative impact on further democratic changes. B92 has obtained national and international reputation for their dedication to responsible journalism, positive social changes and promotion of human rights.<sup>43</sup> For its performance during the 1990s, the company won a number of international press and media awards, including the prestigious MTV Award 'Free Your Mind' in 1998, an award highlighting organizations and/or individuals for an 'an outstanding achievement in the battle against intolerance, prejudice, and social injustice'.<sup>44</sup>

Today, the activities of B92 in the area of CSR are channeled through the B92 Fund, established earlier as an administrative body for non-profit activities of B92, which has in the meantime taken over the management of B92's corporate social responsibility projects as well as non-profit

---

<sup>39</sup> --, About Us, History (ANEM) <<http://www.anem.org.yu/cms/item/oanemu/en/O+nama/Istorijat.html>>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> --, O nama (B92) available only in Serbian: [http://www.b92.net/o\\_nama/index.html](http://www.b92.net/o_nama/index.html)

<sup>44</sup> --, Free Your Mind Award (MTV Europe) <<http://217.69.40.171/english/fym/fymaw/>>

cultural activities realized through the Rex Cultural Center.<sup>45</sup> The B92 Fund team consists of the president of the management board of the B92 Fund (who is at the same time the president of the company), Veran Matic, the director of external communication, Sasa Mirkovic, and the manager of CSR of B92, Gordan Paunovic. The Fund also employs one person who is responsible for coordination of the Fund's activities.<sup>46</sup>

In the beginning of 2006, RTV B92 defined its CSR strategy, with the company recognizing the following components of its corporate social responsibility:

- Responsible realization of primary activities of the company as a media outlet, where B92 explicitly states that its 'editorial policy is based on the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which requires adherence to ethical and objective reporting', and that 'support to these values is one of the parameters for hiring of new employees in B92'.<sup>47</sup> The company sees itself as 'a media watchdog of public interest', further stating that although according to the primary definition B92 'is not a public service broadcaster' but the obligation to preserve public interest arises from 'the history of the company which was characterized by a dramatic struggle for democratic changes and social reforms in Serbia' during the nineties;<sup>48</sup>
- Development of activities dedicated to improvement of living and working conditions of employees (through the means of achieving continuing education, health protection, disease prevention and social programs);
- The Company's devotion to highest ecological standards – the company strives to become a "green media outlet", the first media outlet in Serbia to introduce a range of procedures dedicated to energy savings, waste recycling, savings in material, use of biodiesel fuel and a hybrid vehicle which saves natural resources;<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> --, Virtus – Award for the Contribution at the National Level /Virtus – Nacionalni doprinos (RTV B92) – available only in Serbian, on file with the author

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

<sup>47</sup> --, Virtus – Award for Media Contribution / Virtus – Medijski doprinos (RTV B92) hereinafter Virtus Media – available only in Serbian, on file with the author

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

<sup>49</sup> --, Overview of Community Activities – B92 Actions in 2007-2008 / Pregled drustvenih aktivnosti – akcija B92 za 2007 – 2008. godinu (RTV B92) – available only in Serbian, on file with the author

- Dedication to corporate philanthropy as a way to solve fundamental social problems in the community and support to programs like initiatives for prevention of family violence and stimulation of voluntary blood donations,<sup>50</sup> as well as programs like B92's production of CD books for persons with damaged eyesight.<sup>51</sup>

B92's approach to realization of CSR activities is based on principles of development of partnerships and networking of all stakeholders aiming to achieve these goals.<sup>52</sup> In this sense, the company has developing relations with a large number of partners from all parts of Serbia, including the government and local authorities, as well as partners from the NGO sector and institutions dealing with social issues.<sup>53</sup> For example, in the 'Safe House' campaign, B92 sees its role precisely in connecting all social entities which can contribute to prevention of family violence and quality care for victims, like relevant state institutions, non-governmental organizations, successful companies with developed awareness of CSR issues, other media outlets and citizens of Serbia.<sup>54</sup> B92 had a crucial role in development of cooperation with the Soko Stark company, which has opened 20 new positions for women who were the victims of family violence. Coca Cola HBC gave a similar response, giving financial assistance and opening permanent and seasonal positions for the victims.<sup>55</sup> B92's employees actively participate in these projects, either by donating their blood or participating in the construction of safe houses for the victims.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, B92 states that although the company is not able to set aside a part of its

---

<sup>50</sup> Programs "For Our Children" ("Za nasu decu"), "Safe House" ("Sigurna kuca"), "Make Somebody Happy, Donate Blood" ("Ulepsajte dan sebi i drugima, dajte krv"), campaign for purchase of a digital mammograph etc. --, Description of CSR Strategy / Opis strategije DOP-a B92 (RTV B92) and --, Overview of Community Activities – B92 Actions in 2007-2008 / Pregled drustvenih aktivnosti – akcija B92 za 2007 – 2008. godinu (RTV B92) – both files available only in Serbia, both files on file with author

<sup>51</sup> --, 'Overview of Community Activities – B92 Actions in 2007-2008 / Pregled drustvenih aktivnosti – akcija B92 za 2007 – 2008. godinu (RTV B92) – available only in Serbia, on file with the author

<sup>52</sup> Author's interview with Gordan Paunovic, CSR manager for RTV B92, May 2008

<sup>53</sup> --, Virtus – Award for the Contribution at the National Level / Virtus – Nacionalni doprinos (RTV B92) – available only in Serbian, on file with the author

<sup>54</sup> The campaign to build first 'safe houses' in accordance with the standards of the international NGO WAVE – Women Against Violence Europe – brought together more than 30 participants, from state institutions (which donated, among other things, construction lots for the houses) to the civil sector and companies/sponsors, to media outlets like Blic, Danas, Politika, Vreme, Evropa, as well as Serbian citizens themselves who have made 150.000 calls to the humanitarian number, donating 50-100 dinars each time, Virtus Media

<sup>55</sup> Ibid

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

profit for philanthropy activities, it donates its media space, which has a huge commercial value – the total value of annual broadcast time and content dedicated to corporate philanthropy and CSR amounts to more than 1 million euros.<sup>57</sup>

At the moment, the company is introducing the basic standards of responsible business operations, ISO 9001 and ISO 14001.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, B92 is one of the 54 companies in the database of good practice in the area of corporate social responsibility, and currently is the only broadcaster in the database.<sup>59</sup> For its activities in the CSR sphere B92 has received the first annual "VIRTUS" Corporate Philanthropy Excellence Award given by the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund in Serbia.<sup>60</sup>

Even though detailed investigation of CSR activities of other ANEM stations is not subject to this paper, regular media monitoring shows that other media affiliated in the network are assuming their CSR activities as well. For example, Radio Boom 93, one of the founders of ANEM, undertook partnerships with civil sector in implementing the project 'EU: What's in it for me? What's in it for the citizens of Požarevac?' with the goal of raising awareness on the importance of the European integration process.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, Radio Boom 93 has received an award for helping civil society organizations active in the field of prevention of HIV/AIDS in implementing their campaigns,<sup>62</sup> as well as an award from Red Cross field office for helping in implementation of their campaign 'Together for Humanity (Zajedno za Humanost)' in

---

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> Ibid

<sup>59</sup> The database contains around 500 examples of good practice in the area of CSR – --, Database of Corporate Social Responsibility / Baza podataka društveno odgovornog poslovanja (SIEPA, 2008) available only in Serbian <[http://www.siepa.sr.gov.yu/site/sr/home/1/baze/baza\\_dobre\\_prakse/](http://www.siepa.sr.gov.yu/site/sr/home/1/baze/baza_dobre_prakse/)>

<sup>60</sup> --, B92 dobitnik nagrade Virtus za korporativnu filantropiju (Danas Daily) available only in Serbian at: <<http://www.anem.org.yu/cms/item/medscena/sr/Vesti.html?articleId=9292&type=vest&view=view>>

<sup>61</sup> --, Radio Boom 93 Action / Akcija Radija Boom 93, dan pobjede na branicevskom korzou (Danas daily, 16 May 2008) available only in Serbian at: <<http://www.anem.org.yu/cms/item/medscena/sr/Vesti.html?articleId=10076&type=vest&view=view>>

<sup>62</sup> --, Urucena priznanja zahvalnosti (JAZAS) available only in Serbian: <<http://www.jazas.org.yu/actualities/newsitem.php?id=2086>>

Požarevac.<sup>63</sup> OK Radio Vranje, ANEM member, has also undertaken actions for a cleaner environment in their city in 2008.<sup>64</sup>

The Association itself is active in fostering members' activity in the area of CSR, examples include invitation to its members to broadcast humanitarian and similar activities of civil society organisations free of charge, or undertaking partnerships with other media associations to initiate law amendments to enable the equal treatment of government and civil society advertising in the media.<sup>65</sup> Additionally, a recent survey conducted among the ANEM media outlets showed a high level of interest by ANEM members to use the network to accumulate and exchange knowledge in many areas. Close to 80% of the sample showed interest to receive information on civil society activities and initiatives, total of 62% of the sample desired regular information on the state of affairs of vulnerable groups, such as children, women or minorities, and 52% on the environment protection, in order to use this information in their specialized reporting.<sup>66</sup>

## Conclusion

As it has been noticed during the 2007 conference on CSR activities in Serbia, Serbian businesses have had a difficult period in recent years, facing the economic burdens of destruction by war, etc. and those companies that have survived are faced with economic challenges posed by the country's wish to accede to the EU in the near future.<sup>67</sup> This is true of media companies as well, and in particular those gathered under the umbrella of ANEM, as they are mostly small and

---

<sup>63</sup> --, Završena međunarodna nedelja Crvenog Krsta – priznanje uruceno i Radio Boom 93 (Danas Daily, 23 May 2008) available only in Serbian  
<<http://www.anem.org.yu/cms/item/medscena/sr/Vesti.html?articleId=10092&type=vest&view=view>>

<sup>64</sup> --, OK Radio Vranje: Nova ekoloska akcija (OK Radio) available only in Serbian at:  
<<http://www.anem.org.yu/cms/item/medscena/sr/Vesti.html?articleId=10125&type=vest&view=view>>

<sup>65</sup> Examples include ANEM's invitation to its members to support European Movement in Serbia initiative whose aim was to enable 200 students that have never visited Europe to undertake a month trip to Europe, ANEM internal files

<sup>66</sup> Survey was conducted to investigate ways of enhancing communication and knowledge dissemination within the network, ANEM internal files

<sup>67</sup> --, Interview with Mr. Kai Bethke, Industrial Development Officer, UNIDO (RBI Serbia Newsletter no.11), page 11

medium size enterprises (SMEs), which are licensed to broadcast but which struggle to survive in an oversaturated media market in Serbia. In addition, these media are under the burden of high, if not the highest license fees and royalties in the region. They are broadcasting in parallel to still cable/satellite companies and other terrestrial media, which are unregulated or unlicensed and therefore in no obligation to pay the fees but remain present on the media market, taking a significant portion of the media market share. That is hindering further development of licensed media, consequently their performance in the CSR sphere, and the situation is affecting even the strongest of ANEM's media, RTV B92, as the company had to resort to introducing low quality but popular commercial shows in order to survive on the market. Finding solution to numerous challenges to media affiliated in ANEM are high on the agenda of ANEM, while investing in its membership CSR portfolio might not be the highest of the list of association's priorities.

Media are a specific type of a company; one may argue that, unlike companies in some other sectors, media outlets should by definition be socially responsible. The historical role ANEM members have played in recent Serbian democratic developments might have considerable influence on some members to pioneer the sphere of CSR activities in Serbia. For RTV B92 recognizing and stepping into CSR was unavoidable as much as it was natural. Interviews with B92 representatives showed that the company is placing a great amount of emphasis on what has been popularly called in Serbia 'external' CSR, in particular in preserving public service values of its programming. In addition, 'greening' of the media and greater 'internal' CSR activities are fostered in B92 through introduction of good practices in internal the company's internal rules of operation.

As any other member of the UN Global Compact, RTV B92 is under an obligation of submitting its first Communication on Progress (COP) that is the first CSR report directed at presenting the company's CSR activities to its stakeholders. Having in mind B92's achievements in the sphere of corporate citizenship since the inception of the company, it is expected that the company's report will fully demonstrate its commitment to the principles of the UNGC. The company might want to consider going further and applying methods to measure CSR activities, such as using the indicators in reporting to ensure its stakeholders an easier way to follow the company's progress in implementing the UNGC Principles over the years to come. Some of the best COPs, so called 'notable' COPs, use such methods to demonstrate commitment and progress in

implementing the UNGC Principles. Finally, it should not come as a surprise to see RTV B92 following the example of the MTV Networks Europe and others who have joined BLIHR (an initiative that is 'road testing' the Norms, a document demanding higher level of company's responsibility towards human rights beyond the sphere of voluntary adherence) in their belief that voluntary and non-voluntary approaches to CSR are complementary and not in contradiction.

Other ANEM media might also want to consider assuming their CSR responsibilities in the near future, as the introduction of CSR activities is now considered necessity rather than mere conformity. This is particularly the case for media companies whose social responsibilities are two-fold, responsibilities of a broadcaster and of a company, which is resulting in specific 'sphere of influence' of these companies.<sup>68</sup> The Government of the Republic of Serbia's expectation from the media in the sphere of sustainable development is high, as the recently adopted government policy on sustainable development shows. Not only is media considered a valuable partner in promoting and supporting CSR activities but media support is seen as one of the major preconditions necessary for adoption and implementation of the concept of sustainable development.<sup>69</sup> The government's policy emphasizes the importance of a public service broadcaster but makes no difference between public service broadcaster on one side, and national, regional and local private media on the other, when defining the governments' strategic goal of having active media participation in the area of sustainable development and environment protection.<sup>70</sup> This should not come as a surprise as it is common that business interests, no

---

<sup>68</sup> This is notwithstanding that at the time of writing of this paper they other ANEM members are assuming their CSR responsibilities. ANEM encompass close to a hundred small and medium size enterprises and detailed research into their CSR activities has been outside of the scope of this publication.

<sup>69</sup> --, Sustainable Development Strategy of Serbia / Predlog strategije odrzivog razvoja (Government of Serbia May 9<sup>th</sup> 2008) <<http://www.odrzivi-razvoj.sr.gov.yu/assets/download/Nacionalna-strategija-odrzivog-razvoja-Republike%20Srbije-Finalni-Nacrt.pdf>>

(hereinafter Sustainable Development Strategy) item 5

The strategy is critical to impartiality of media reporting in relation to the questions of relation, cultural identity, and questions of quantity and quality of such programming. Strategy for Sustainable Development, items 50 and 77

<sup>70</sup> Sustainable Development Strategy, item 5

matter in which sector the business is, are increasingly linked with sustainable development goals by many.

Aside from the government, other stakeholders show great interest in cooperating with the media on CSR issues as well. Interviews held in May and June 2008 with representatives of the UNGC in Serbia and Smart Kolektiv, a leading national NGO in the area of CSR, showed high interest by these organizations and consequently their respective sectors in working more closely with the ANEM network and its media outlets. Cooperation is possible in many areas, such as in education of journalists who wish to specialize in investigative reporting on the CSR and/or cooperation through joining the initiatives such as the UNGC. In supporting ANEM members to assume their CSR activities, the role of the ANEM is invaluable. Being an ‘umbrella’ organization of close to a hundred media outlets, ANEM can foster accumulation and dissemination of knowledge through its network, introducing examples of good practices and exchange of information on CSR trends applicable to small and medium size media enterprises. After all, this is likely to contribute to spill over of such practices to other media outlets, print or broadcast, increasing not only the level of awareness of the importance of CSR through around the country, but also creating a lively and informed debate on the many forms the initiatives on the CSR may take, inclusive of the non-voluntary initiatives that are requiring highest level of adherence to human rights.

*Snezana S. Green has been affiliated with the Association of Independent Electronic Media and its founding member RTV B92 from 1998 till 2003 as one of their attorneys within Zivkovic & Samardzic Law Office and than again as the Association’s Coordinator since 2008. She has advised inter-governmental organizations and local journalists’ associations on, among other, issues of freedom of the media and human rights. She holds a master of studies degree in International Human Rights Law at the University of Oxford and has been active in the field of corporate social responsibility since 2005.*

### *Website and Organizations Mentioned in this Publication*

ANEM	<a href="http://www.anem.org.yu">www.anem.org.yu</a>
BLIHR	<a href="http://www.blihr.org">www.blihr.org</a>
European Commission	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm</a>
Media CSR Forum	<a href="http://www.mediacsrforum.org">www.mediacsrforum.org</a>
MTV Networks Europe	<a href="http://www.mtvne.com">www.mtvne.com</a>
OHCHR	<a href="http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx">http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx</a>
Radio Boom 93	<a href="http://www.boom93.co.yu">www.boom93.co.yu</a>
Radio OK Vranje	<a href="http://www.okradio.info">www.okradio.info</a>
RTV B92	<a href="http://www.b92.net">www.b92.net</a>
Smart Kolektiv	<a href="http://www.smartkolektiv.org">www.smartkolektiv.org</a>
SRSB	<a href="http://www.business-humanrights.org/Gettingstarted/UNSpecialRepresentative">www.business-humanrights.org/Gettingstarted/UNSpecialRepresentative</a>
UN Human Rights Council	<a href="http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/">http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/</a>
UNGC	<a href="http://www.unglobalcompact.org">www.unglobalcompact.org</a>
UNIDO	<a href="http://www.unido.org">www.unido.org</a>



The views expressed in this publication are the authors' own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Association of Independent Electronic Media or any of the individuals and/or legal entities whose case examples are included. Moreover, the Association of Independent Electronic Media make no representation concerning, and do not guarantee, the source, originality, accuracy, completeness or reliability of any statement, information, data, finding, interpretation, advice or opinion contained within the publication.



This publication is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.