

The Role of Matriarchal Values in Shaping the Foundations of Sustainable Rural Development

Nadiia Stoliarchuk¹, Mykola Krylov²

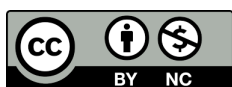
Abstract. Achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires not only improving economic and institutional mechanisms but also considering sociocultural factors that shape community interactions, levels of social capital, and responsible attitudes toward natural resources. This article aims to provide theoretical substantiation of the role of matriarchal values in shaping a sustainable economy as a basis for the sustainable development of rural areas, and to identify the mechanisms by which these values influence the development of community social capital and the achievement of the SDGs. The methodological framework of the study is based on systemic, axiological, and interdisciplinary approaches and employs methods of analysis, synthesis, comparison, systematization, structural and logical analysis, and conceptual modeling. The article reviews matriarchal values as a sociocultural resource that fosters trust, cooperation, mutual responsibility, civic engagement, intergenerational solidarity, and environmental awareness, as well as substantiates their influence on the development of community social capital, the establishment of a sustainable economy, and the enhancement of the economic, social, and environmental resilience of rural areas. The results of the study indicate an interrelationship among matriarchal values, social capital, the achievement of the SDGs, and the sustainable development of rural areas. The study offers a conceptually new approach, according to which matriarchal values are considered a factor in the formation of community social capital, which mediates the emergence of a sustainable economy and facilitates the achievement of the SDGs at the local level. Unlike traditional economic models, the proposed approach emphasizes the role of sociocultural values as a prerequisite for economic resilience and long-term development. The results of this study may be useful to government bodies and other institutions in developing strategies for the sustainable development of territorial communities, rural development programs, mechanisms to strengthen social capital, and the implementation of the SDGs at the local level.

Keywords: matriarchal values, sustainable economy, sustainable development, rural areas, social capital, Sustainable Development Goals, rural communities, sustainable agriculture.

Received: 5 August 2026 | **Revised:** 7 September 2026 | **Accepted:** 10 September 2026 | **Published:** 30 September 2026

Suggested Citation

Stoliarchuk, N., & Krylov, M. (2026). The Role of Matriarchal Values in Shaping the Foundations of Sustainable Rural Development. *Oblik i finansi*, 3(113), 229-237. [https://doi.org/10.33146/2518-1181-2026-3\(113\)-229-237](https://doi.org/10.33146/2518-1181-2026-3(113)-229-237)



This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 License (<http://www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited and the use is non-commercial.

© The Author(s) 2026

¹ Nadiia Stoliarchuk, National Scientific Centre “Institute of Agrarian Economics”, Ukraine.

ORCID 0000-0001-9775-093X

E-mail: stolyarchuk.iae@gmail.com (Corresponding author)

² Mykola Krylov, National Scientific Centre “Institute of Agrarian Economics”, Ukraine.

ORCID 0009-0009-8107-467X

Роль матріархальних цінностей у формуванні основи сталого розвитку сільських територій

Надія Столярчук¹, Микола Крилов¹

¹ Національний науковий центр «Інститут аграрної економіки», Україна

Анотація. Досягнення Цілей сталого розвитку ООН потребує не лише вдосконалення економічних та інституційних механізмів, а й урахування соціокультурних чинників, які визначають характер взаємодії в громаді, рівень соціального капіталу та відповідальне ставлення до природних ресурсів. Метою статті є теоретичне обґрунтування ролі матріархальних цінностей у формуванні сталої економіки як основи сталого розвитку сільських територій, а також визначення механізмів, через які ці цінності впливають на розвиток соціального капіталу громад і досягнення Цілей сталого розвитку ООН. Методологія дослідження представлена синтезом системного, аксіологічного та міждисциплінарного підходів із застосуванням методів аналізу, синтезу, порівняння, систематизації, структурно-логічного аналізу та концептуального моделювання. У статті зроблено огляд матріархальних цінностей як соціокультурного ресурсу, що сприяє формуванню довіри, співпраці, взаємної відповідальності, громадянської активності, міжпоколінної солідарності та екологічної свідомості. Обґрунтовано їхній вплив на розвиток соціального капіталу громад, становлення сталої економіки та підвищення економічної, соціальної й екологічної стійкості сільських територій. Результати дослідження свідчать, що між матріархальними цінностями, соціальним капіталом, досягненням Цілей сталого розвитку ООН та сталим розвитком сільських територій існує взаємозв'язок. У дослідженні пропонується концептуально новий підхід, згідно з яким матріархальні цінності розглядаються як ключовий чинник формування соціального капіталу громад, що створює передумови для розвитку сталої економіки та досягнення цілей сталого розвитку на місцевому рівні. На відміну від традиційних економічних моделей, запропонований підхід наголошує на ролі соціокультурних цінностей як передумови економічної стійкості та довгострокового розвитку. Результати цього дослідження можуть бути корисними для державних органів та інших інституцій в процесі розробки стратегій сталого розвитку територіальних громад, програм розвитку сільських територій, механізмів зміцнення соціального капіталу та реалізації Цілей сталого розвитку на місцевому рівні.

Ключові слова: матріархальні цінності, стала економіка, сталий розвиток, сільські території, соціальний капітал, Цілі сталого розвитку, сільські громади, стале сільське господарство.

INTRODUCTION

The current stage of global economic development is characterized by intensifying environmental, social, and economic challenges, including climate change, natural resource degradation, growing social inequality, food insecurity, and the depopulation of rural areas. In response to these challenges, the international community has developed the concept of sustainable development, which has been operationalized through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030 (United Nations, 2026). Their implementation aims to achieve a balance between economic efficiency, social equity, and environmental sustainability.

Issues related to sustainable development are particularly relevant for rural areas, which serve not only as producers of food but also as custodians of natural capital, cultural heritage, and social stability. Contemporary approaches to rural development increasingly extend beyond traditional economic mechanisms, emphasizing the roles of social capital, local institutions, trust, cooperation, and local communities' value orientations. This is especially important in the context of the post-conflict recovery of rural areas in Ukraine.

Against this background, increasing attention has been devoted to the study of matriarchal values, understood as a system of sociocultural principles

grounded in care, mutual responsibility, cooperation, solidarity, equality, intergenerational continuity, and harmony with nature (Waring, 1988). These values are largely consistent with the principles of sustainable development. They may be regarded as a factor contributing to the formation of community social capital, the development of a sustainable economy, and the long-term resilience of rural areas.

Göttner-Abendroth (2012) is widely recognized as the founder of the contemporary school of matriarchal studies. In her monograph "Matriarchal Societies: Studies on Indigenous Cultures Across the Globe," she proposed a new definition of matriarchy as a social system based on maternal values, gender equality, consensual governance, and economic reciprocity. This concept was further elaborated in the Principles of Sustainable Societies: Matriarchy as an Alternative Paradigm, in which Göttner-Abendroth substantiates the relationship between matriarchal values, the gift economy, local self-sufficiency, and the sustainable development of society (Göttner-Abendroth, 2020).

Vaughan (2007) argues that "giving is fundamental in the formation of human beings, not only because it is necessary for primary subsistence, but because it is at the basis of human relationships. The 'do ut des' exchange comes later, and the capitalist economy based on it contradicts, cancels, and exploits unilateral gifting and the

values of communication and community. Recognizing and returning to the maternal economy is a way out of the end-of-the-world scenario we are now facing.”

According to Caillé (2000), the dynamics of ‘giving–receiving–reciprocating’ can and should serve as the foundation for the social sciences, including economics, as well as for political philosophy. This perspective demonstrates that the dominant contemporary model of the individual homo economicus, concerned solely with maximizing personal satisfaction, utility, or preferences, is neither natural nor universal but rather detrimental to future generations.

This raises the question of what theoretical alternative can be proposed to the industrialization-based economic model. The conception of human beings as homo economicus, which underpins this model, represents the crystallization of a broader and much older anthropological and philosophical tradition of utilitarianism. The French anthropologist Mauss (1954) demonstrated that archaic and traditional societies, and to a certain extent even contemporary societies, are founded not on contractual relations and commercial exchange but on what he defined as the gift, or more precisely, the triple obligation to give, receive, and reciprocate, that is, on principles closely aligned with matriarchal values. Consequently, it may be argued that humanity is gradually constructing new forms of society without yet fully conceptualizing or identifying them. This process creates new trajectories for developing sustainable economies, including sustainable rural development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As Dr. Göttner-Abendroth (2023) argues, “Economically, we have reached a situation where it is no longer possible to expand large-scale industrial production and the Western standard of living without risking the complete destruction of the Earth’s biosphere. The way out of this situation is a subsistence economy, a style of sustainable economy for local and regional units.” In her earlier works, she further emphasizes: “Female energy of collective values such as kinship, community, ecology, consensus, and healing. Working together without ego attitudes, focusing on power and status, using synchronistic and sociocratic approaches. The feminine within us cultivates another way of living together” (Göttner-Abendroth, 1991). According to Santovetti (2021), “Matriarchal cultures were, and still are, truly gender-equal societies that existed for thousands of years before nomadic cultures, identified as Indo-European invasions, violently suppressed these sacred feminine cultures to establish our current patriarchal model of society.” In contrast to the traditional interpretation of matriarchy as a form of female dominance, contemporary scholars define it as a model of an egalitarian society grounded in equality, consensus, mutual responsibility, and collective resource governance (Göttner-Abendroth, 2022). An important contribution to contemporary sustainability thinking is Raworth’s (2017) concept of Doughnut Economics, which seeks to reconcile environmental sustainability with social well-being within planetary boundaries, thereby promoting a

fair, inclusive, and regenerative economy. The model incorporates the nine planetary boundaries: climate change, ocean acidification, chemical pollution (novel entities), biogeochemical flows (nitrogen and phosphorus), freshwater use, land-system change, biodiversity loss, atmospheric aerosol loading, and stratospheric ozone depletion (Raworth, 2017; Rockström et al., 2009). Ukrainian scholars have investigated traditional systems of economic organization and reciprocal exchange primarily through ethnographic, archaeological, and economic studies, considering material values as a foundation of social organization in agrarian communities (Petrov, 1972; Sehedá, 2021; Shukurov et al., 2015). However, the concept of matriarchal values and their influence on the contemporary economy, sustainable development, and, consequently, the development of rural areas has not yet been systematically explored in Ukraine. Among Ukrainian economists, several research directions closely related to the present study can be identified, including gender equality (Strelnyk, 2023), women's participation in the economy (Bezhenar et al., 2022; Chervinska, 2026), inclusive development, social capital (Herasymchuk, 2022; Lupenko et al., 2024; Patyka et al., 2023), and human development (Libanova, 2015).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This article aims to provide theoretical substantiation of the role of matriarchal values in shaping a sustainable economy as the foundation for the sustainable development of rural areas, and to identify the mechanisms by which these values influence the development of community social capital and the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article has a theoretical and conceptual character. The methodological framework of the study is based on systemic, interdisciplinary, and axiological approaches, which enabled a comprehensive investigation of the role of matriarchal values in shaping a sustainable economy as the foundation for the sustainable development of rural areas.

The systemic approach was applied to consider sustainable rural development as an integrated socio-economic system in which economic, social, environmental, and institutional components interact. This approach made it possible to determine the role of matriarchal values in the formation of community social capital and their influence on ensuring economic resilience.

The axiological approach was employed to examine matriarchal values as a sociocultural foundation of economic behavior, determining the nature of interactions among community members and shaping trust, cooperation, mutual responsibility, intergenerational solidarity, and environmental awareness.

The interdisciplinary approach ensured the integration of concepts from economic theory, sustainable development studies, sociology, anthropology, contemporary matriarchal studies, feminist economics,

and social capital theory to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

The study employed the following general scientific methods: analysis and synthesis – to generalize scientific approaches to the interpretation of the concept of ‘matriarchal values’; comparative analysis – to compare traditional economic models with contemporary concepts of sustainable development; systematization – to classify matriarchal values and determine their interrelations with community social capital and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; structural and logical analysis – to establish causal relationships between matriarchal values, the formation of social capital, the development of a sustainable economy, and the achievement of sustainable rural development; abstract and logical method – to formulate theoretical generalizations, conclusions, and authorial definitions; conceptual modelling – to develop an original model of the relationship between matriarchal values and the sustainable development of rural areas.

The information base of the research includes works by Ukrainian and international scholars on sustainable development, rural development, social capital, matriarchal studies, care economy, feminist economics, and alternative models of economic development, as well as international regulatory documents, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and materials of international organizations.

The scientific novelty of the methodological approach lies in combining axiological and systemic perspectives, which enables consideration of matriarchal values as a sociocultural resource for the formation of social capital, which in turn influences the development of a sustainable economy and the implementation of the SDGs at the level of rural areas. This integrated approach expands traditional economic research by incorporating the analysis of value-based determinants of development and represents one of the key elements of the study’s scientific novelty.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sustainable rural development is a comprehensive concept that involves the balanced development of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of rural areas to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept is based on the principles formulated in the Brundtland Commission Report and entails integrating economic growth, social equity, and environmental protection (Hinrichsen, 1987).

Rural areas are considered not merely spaces for agricultural production but multifunctional socio-economic systems that integrate productive activities, human habitation, the preservation of natural resources, cultural heritage, and local traditions. Therefore, sustainable rural development implies ensuring the harmonious functioning of all these components.

The economic dimension of sustainable development aims to create a competitive and diversified rural economy, promote small and medium-sized enterprises,

family farming, and cooperation, create new employment opportunities, and improve household incomes. An important prerequisite is the efficient use of natural resources and the implementation of innovative technologies that ensure economic growth without depleting natural capital.

The social dimension encompasses improving the quality of life of rural populations, developing human capital, and ensuring access to education, healthcare, social services, and infrastructure. Particular attention is paid to the development of local self-government, civic engagement, social cohesion, and the preservation of the cultural identity of rural communities.

The environmental dimension involves the rational use of land, water, and forest resources, the conservation of biodiversity, the reduction of the negative impact of economic activities on the environment, adaptation to climate change, and the implementation of environmentally sustainable production technologies.

Thus, the essence of sustainable rural development lies in achieving a balance between economic efficiency, social well-being, and environmental security. Only the harmonious integration of these three dimensions creates the conditions for the long-term development of rural communities, enhances their competitiveness, and strengthens their resilience to economic, social, and environmental challenges.

The contemporary understanding of sustainable development increasingly extends beyond economic and environmental aspects to encompass a system of socio-cultural values that shape the behavior of individuals and institutions. In this context, particular importance is placed on matriarchal values, which are grounded in care, mutual responsibility, cooperation, solidarity, intergenerational continuity, and harmony with nature. These values contribute to the formation of social capital within communities, facilitate cooperation, promote responsible management of natural resources, and strengthen local economies, making them important factors in ensuring sustainable rural development.

The role of matriarchal values in shaping a sustainable economy and developing rural agricultural communities lies in strengthening social cohesion, promoting responsible governance of natural resources, and supporting models of economic activity oriented towards the long-term well-being of communities. The concept of matriarchal values does not imply female dominance; rather, it refers to a system of principles based on care, cooperation, mutual support, equality, and harmony with nature (Fistetti, 2023).

Matriarchal societies represent genuinely gender-egalitarian communities; this concept concerns the social contribution of both genders. Even when women occupy a central position, this principle guides the social functioning and freedom of both sexes. Matriarchal societies should not be perceived as a mirror image of patriarchal societies, with women replacing men as a dominant group, because they have never relied on patriarchal hierarchical structures. There was a time when people lived in communities organized differently, and

one alternative was a matriarchal society based on equality and peaceful coexistence (Caillé, 2002).

Matriarchal values influence the sustainable development of rural communities. The application of principles of cooperation and social responsibility contributes to: the development of agricultural cooperatives; the dissemination of environmentally

friendly production technologies; the strengthening of food security; the creation of new employment opportunities in rural areas; the preservation of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge; and increasing the resilience of communities to economic and climate-related challenges (Table 1).

Table 1. Main aspects of the influence of matriarchal values

Aspect	Influence
1. Rational use of natural resources	Matriarchal values promote responsible stewardship of land, water, and biodiversity. This approach is not only focused on profit, but also on preserving natural resources for future generations, which is the foundation of a sustainable economy.
2. Social cohesion of the community	Communities where mutual support and collective responsibility are valued are more likely to develop cooperatives, resource sharing, and mutual aid among farmers, thereby increasing the resilience of local economies to crises.
3. Development of family farming	Women traditionally play an important role in running family farms and preserving local traditions in agriculture, seed production, and food culture. Supporting women's entrepreneurship contributes to diversifying rural household incomes.
4. Investment in human capital	Matriarchal values emphasize the importance of education, health, and child welfare. Such investments create a skilled population capable of implementing innovative agricultural practices.
5. Inclusive governance	Involving women in decision-making processes in local government and agricultural cooperatives contributes to a more balanced distribution of resources, taking into account the interests of different social groups, and to increased transparency in governance.

Source: prepared by the authors based on research by Cheal (2015), Gibson-Graham (2006), Mann (2015), Mies (1999), Mouffe (2013), Reeves Sanday (2002), Waring (1988).

Matriarchal values are a system of values that contributes to the implementation of the SDGs. In this case, matriarchal values serve as a sociocultural basis for the sustainable development of rural areas. Their potential lies in developing a culture of environmental care, fostering cooperation, strengthening human capital, and advancing inclusive governance. When combined with modern technologies, effective institutions, and principles of gender equality, matriarchal values contribute to increased economic sustainability, environmental responsibility, and social well-being in rural areas.

The concept of sustainable development is based on achieving a balance between economic growth, social well-being, and environmental conservation. However, the effectiveness of implementing this concept depends not only on economic or institutional mechanisms but also on the system of social values that determine the behavior of people, communities, and organizations.

In this context, matriarchal values, grounded in care, mutual responsibility, cooperation, equality, solidarity, peaceful coexistence, respect for nature, and intergenerational responsibility, take on special importance. These principles largely coincide with the

ideology of sustainable development and create a social basis for achieving its goals.

Unlike the development model focused exclusively on maximizing economic profit, the matriarchal system of values emphasizes the long-term preservation of natural capital, the development of human potential, and the strengthening of community social cohesion. That is why it can be considered one of the cultural prerequisites for the formation of a sustainable rural economy.

It is in rural areas that matriarchal values can be most fully realized due to the peculiarities of how local communities function. They contribute to: the development of family farming; the creation of agricultural cooperatives; the formation of social capital; the preservation of traditional knowledge; the development of women's entrepreneurship; the responsible management of land resources; the support of local food security; and the transmission of ecological culture to future generations (Habermas, 1973).

Thus, matriarchal values serve as a socio-cultural mechanism that ensures the implementation of the economic, social, and environmental components of sustainable development in rural areas (Figure 1).

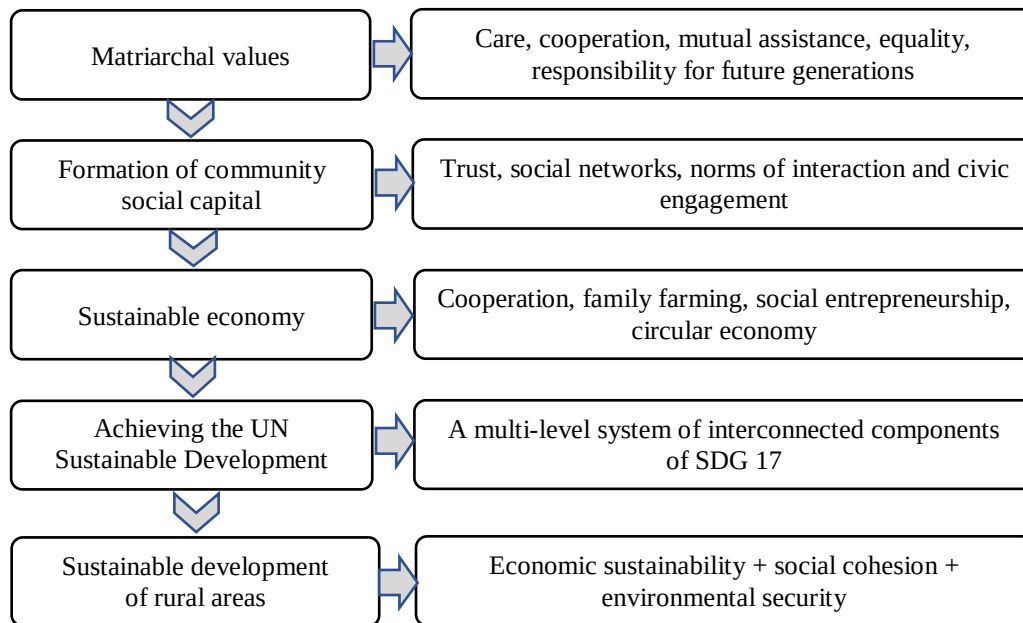


Figure 1. Conceptual model of matriarchal values

Source: prepared by the authors based on research by Cheal (2015), Gibson-Graham (2006), Mann (2015), Mies (1999), Mouffe (2013), Reeves Sanday (2002), Waring (1988).

The proposed approach enables the consideration of matriarchal values as a socio-cultural foundation of sustainable development, facilitating the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. Through the formation of social capital, the development of cooperation, responsible natural resource management, support for family farming, and inclusive governance, these values are translated into practical mechanisms to ensure the

economic, social, and environmental sustainability of rural areas. Thus, matriarchal values represent not only a cultural characteristic of a community but also a significant factor in shaping a sustainable model of rural development. Table 2 summarizes the interrelationships among matriarchal values, the SDGs, and the sustainable development of rural areas.

Table 2. The relationship between matriarchal values and the Sustainable Development Goals and the sustainable development of rural areas

Matriarchal value	Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Impact on the sustainable development of rural areas
1	2	3
Caring for people and the community	SDG 1 “End poverty”; SDG 3 “Ensure good health and well-being”; SDG 10 “Reduce inequality”	Improving the quality of life, developing social protection, strengthening human capital, and reducing the population’s social vulnerability.
Responsibility for future generations	SDG 4 “Quality Education”; SDG 13 “Combating Climate Change”; SDG 15 “Conservation of Terrestrial Ecosystems”	Creating environmental awareness, investing in education, preserving natural resources, and utilizing the community’s land potential.
Harmony with nature	SDG 12 “Responsible Consumption and Production”; SDG 13; SDG 15	Rational land use, development of organic production, protection of biodiversity, and adaptation to climate change.
Cooperation and mutual assistance	SDG 8 “Decent work and economic growth”; SDG 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”; SDG 17 “Partnerships for sustainable development”	Development of agricultural cooperation, social entrepreneurship, increasing trust between community members, and the effectiveness of local government.
Equality and inclusion	SDG 5 “Gender Equality”; SDG 10; SDG 16 “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”	Expanding the participation of women and youth in decision-making, developing inclusive governance, and increasing social cohesion.

1	2	3
Preservation of traditions and cultural heritage	SDG 11 “Sustainable communities”; SDG 4	Preservation of local identity, development of agrotourism, support of traditional farming technologies and crafts.
Family and intergenerational succession	SDG 2 “Zero Hunger”; SDG 8; SDG 4	Development of family farming, transfer of agricultural knowledge and practices, and strengthening food security and economic sustainability of farms.
Social responsibility	SDG 8; SDG 12; SDG 16	Formation of responsible entrepreneurship, efficient use of local resources, development of a closed-loop economy, and transparent governance.

Source: prepared by the authors based on research by United Nations (1987), United Nations (2026), Mokhnenko et al. (2025), Galaz (2014), Bennholdt-Thomsen & Mies (1999), Caillé (2020), Hadzalo et al. (2019), Patyka & Mohylnyi (2023).

In contemporary academic literature, interest in matriarchal values is driven by the search for new approaches to achieving sustainable development amid global environmental, economic, and social challenges. At the same time, it is important to avoid claims that matriarchal values represent a universal or the only pathway towards sustainable development. A more academically sound approach is to consider them as a set of sociocultural principles, including care, cooperation,

responsibility, harmony with nature, and intergenerational solidarity (Steffen et al., 2015). These principles are largely consistent with the concept of sustainable development. They may contribute to the implementation of the SDGs, particularly in agriculture and rural development. Such an approach is scientifically balanced and enables the integration of cultural, economic, and managerial dimensions into a unified research framework (Table 3).

Table 3. Generalized interconnection scheme

Value level	Institutional level	Development result
Matriarchal values (care, cooperation, harmony with nature, responsibility, equality)	Implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals through local policies, cooperation, inclusive governance, and environmentally responsible management	Sustainable development of rural areas: economic sustainability, social cohesion, environmental safety, and high quality of life of the population

Source: prepared by the authors based on research by the United Nations (1987), the United Nations (2026), Mokhnenko et al. (2025), Galaz (2014), Bennholdt-Thomsen & Mies (1999), Caillé (2020).

The search for new models of economic development amid global environmental, social, and food crises has spurred interest in the sociocultural factors of sustainable development. One such area is the study of matriarchal values, which are considered the basis of social cohesion, the care economy, mutual aid, and responsible environmental management.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study showed that the modern concept of sustainable development requires the integration of not only economic, environmental, and institutional mechanisms but also sociocultural factors that shape the nature of interaction among community members, as well as the levels of trust, responsibility, and readiness for collective problem-solving at the local level.

Matriarchal values, grounded in care, mutual responsibility, cooperation, solidarity, equality, intergenerational continuity, and harmony with nature, are conceptually consistent with the fundamental principles of sustainable development and the SDGs. Therefore, they can be considered an important sociocultural resource that contributes to the development of a sustainable local economy.

The key mechanism through which matriarchal values influence rural development is the formation of

community social capital. The development of trust, cooperation, civic participation, inclusiveness, intergenerational interaction, and environmental responsibility enhances the community's capacity for self-organization, effective management of local resources, development of family farming, agricultural cooperatives, social entrepreneurship, and other forms of sustainable economic activity.

The study has identified the relationship between matriarchal values and the implementation of the SDGs. In particular, matriarchal values contribute to achieving goals related to poverty eradication, food security, gender equality, decent work, responsible consumption and production, climate action, sustainable communities, and partnerships. This demonstrates the relevance of incorporating a value-based component into rural development strategies.

The study offers a conceptually new approach, according to which matriarchal values are considered a factor in the formation of community social capital, which mediates the emergence of a sustainable economy and facilitates the achievement of the SDGs at the local level. Unlike traditional economic models, the proposed approach emphasizes the role of sociocultural values as a prerequisite for economic resilience and long-term development.

Government agencies and other institutions can apply the proposed theoretical provisions to develop sustainable development strategies for territorial communities, rural development programs, mechanisms for strengthening social capital, support for family farming, cooperative movements, and other forms of local economic activity aimed at achieving the SDGs.

The prospects for further research include developing methodological tools to assess the impact of matriarchal values on social capital levels and the resilience of rural communities, as well as empirically verifying the proposed conceptual model through case studies of territorial communities across different regions. This will contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of value-based factors in shaping a sustainable economy and ensuring the comprehensive development of rural areas.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

CRediT Author Statement

Nadiia Stoliarchuk: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Writing – Original Draft; **Mykola Krylov:** Formal Analysis, Investigation, Validation, Visualization, Writing – Review & Editing.

Acknowledgments

We are sincerely grateful to the Erasmus+ training course “ACKnowledge – Ancient Knowledge, Modern Eco-Communities” (Magliano Sabina, Italy, 2026), where we gained new knowledge and perspectives that inspired and continue to inform the development of this research, and to our mentors, Sabina Santovetti and Francesca Lulli, for their inspiring ideas and valuable support.

4 References

1. Bennholdt-Thomsen, V., & Mies, M. (1999). *The subsistence perspective: Beyond the globalized economy*. Zed Books.
2. Bezhenar, I. M., Skyba, H. I., & Kravchenko, S. A. (2022). Analytical assessment of rural areas development. *Scientific Works of Interregional Academy of Personnel Management. Economic Sciences*, 2(65), 66–78. <https://doi.org/10.32689/2523-4536/65-8> [in Ukrainian]
3. Caillé, A. (2000). *Anthropologie du don: Le tiers paradigme*. Desclée de Brouwer.
4. Caillé, A. (2002). The gift as sufficient source of normativity. *Diogenes*, 49(195), 77–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/039219210204919516>
5. Caillé, A. (2020). *The gift paradigm: A short introduction to the anti-utilitarian movement in the social sciences*. Prickly Paradigm Press.
6. Cheal, D. (2015). *The gift economy*. Taylor & Francis.
7. Chervinska, T. M. (2026). Development of the concept of sustainable development. *Efektivna ekonomika*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.32702/2307-2105.2026.2.72> [in Ukrainian]
8. Fistetti, F. (2023). The gift paradigm: Towards a science of “total social facts”. *Elementa: Intersections between Philosophy, Epistemology and Empirical Perspectives*, 3(1–2). <https://doi.org/10.7358/elementa-2023-0102-fisf>
9. Galaz, V. (2014). *Global environmental governance, technology and politics: The Anthropocene gap*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
10. Gibson-Graham, J. K. (2006). *A postcapitalist politics*. University of Minnesota Press.
11. Göttner-Abendroth, H. (1991). *The dancing goddess: Principles of a matriarchal aesthetic*. Beacon Press.
12. Göttner-Abendroth, H. (2012). *Matriarchal societies: Studies on indigenous cultures across the globe*. Peter Lang Publishing.
13. Göttner-Abendroth, H. (2020). *The principles of sustainable societies: Matriarchy as an alternative paradigm*. Peter Lang Publishing.
14. Göttner-Abendroth, H. (2022). *History of matriarchal societies and the rise of patriarchy: West Asia and Europe*. Peter Lang Publishing.
15. Göttner-Abendroth, H. (2023). Matriarchal politics. Retrieved from: <https://goettner-abendroth.de/en/matriarchy/matriarchal-politics>
16. Habermas, J. (1973). A postscript to Knowledge and Human Interests. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 3(2), 157–189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004839317300300204>
17. Hazzalo, Ya. M., Zhuk, V. M., Mohylova, M. M., et al. (2019). *Scientific foundations and strategic priorities of sustainable development of rural areas of Ukraine*. Kyiv: National Scientific Center “Institute of Agrarian Economics” [in Ukrainian]

18. Herasymchuk, V. (2022). Theoretical aspects of rural areas development in Ukraine: Problems and solutions. *Economy and Society*, 45. <https://doi.org/10.32782/2524-0072/2022-45-88> [in Ukrainian]
19. Hinrichsen, D. (1987). Our common future: A reader's guide. The 'Brundtland Report' explained. Earthscan Ltd.
20. Libanova, E. M. (Ed.). (2015). Human development in Ukraine. Modernization of social policy: Regional aspect. Kyiv: M. V. Ptukha Institute of Demography and Social Research of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. [in Ukrainian]
21. Lupenko, Yu. O., Yehorov, B. V., Nemchenko, V. V., & Lahodiienko, N. V. (2024). Human capital development as a basis for sustainable development of rural areas. *Aktualni pytannia ekonomichnykh nauk*, 3–4. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14860929> [in Ukrainian]
22. Mann, B. A., & Göttner-Abendroth, H. (2015). Matriarchal studies. In: Oxford bibliographies in anthropology. Oxford University Press.
23. Mauss, M. (1954). The gift: Forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies. Routledge & Kegan Paul.
24. Mies, M., & Bennholdt-Thomsen, V. (1999). The subsistence perspective: Beyond the globalised economy. Zed Books.
25. Mouffe, C. (2013). Agonistics: Thinking the world politically. Verso.
26. Patyka, N., Sokolova, A., Movchaniuk, A., Sysoieva, I., & Khirivskyi, R. (2023). Ukraine's rural areas in the conditions of decentralization and local self-government reform: Challenges and prospects. *Agricultural and Resource Economics*, 9(3), 266–295. <https://doi.org/10.51599/are.2023.09.03.12> [in Ukrainian]
27. Patyka, N. I., & Mohylnyi, O. M. (2023). Employment of rural population: State and prospects. Kyiv: National Scientific Center "Institute of Agrarian Economics". [in Ukrainian]
28. Petrov, V. P. (1972). Ethnogenesis of the Slavs. Kyiv. [in Ukrainian]
29. Raworth, K. (2017). Doughnut economics: Seven ways to think like a 21st-century economist. Random House Business.
30. Reeves Sanday, P. (2002). Women at the center: Life in a modern matriarchy. Cornell University Press.
31. Rockström, J., Steffen, W., Noone, K., Persson, Å., Chapin, F. S., Lambin, E. F., Lenton, T. M., Scheffer, M., Folke, C., Schellnhuber, H. J., Nykvist, B., De Wit, C. A., Hughes, T., van der Leeuw, S., Rodhe, H., Sörlin, S., Snyder, P. K., Costanza, R., Svedin, U., Falkenmark, M., Karlberg, L., Corell, R. W., Fabry, V. J., Hansen, J., Walker, B., Liverman, D., Richardson, K., Crutzen, P., & Foley, J. A. (2009). A safe operating space for humanity. *Nature*, 461(7263), 472–475. <https://doi.org/10.1038/461472a>
32. Santovetti, S. (2021). Feminine regenerative cultures. Matriculture. Retrieved from: <https://www.matriculture.net/feminine-regenerative-cultures/>
33. Seheda, S. (2021). Historical anthropology of Ukraine. Lviv. [in Ukrainian]
34. Shukurov, A., Sarson, G., Videiko, M., Henderson, K., Shiel, R., Dolukhanov, P., & Pashkevich, G. (2015). Productivity of premodern agriculture in the Cucuteni-Trypillia area. *Human Biology*, 87(3), 235–282. <https://doi.org/10.13110/humanbiology.87.3.0235>
35. Steffen, W., Richardson, K., Rockström, J., Cornell, S. E., Fetzer, I., Bennett, E. M., Biggs, R., Carpenter, S. R., de Vries, W., de Wit, C. A., Folke, C., Gerten, D., Heinke, J., Mace, G. M., Persson, L. M., Ramanathan, V., Reyers, B., & Sörlin, S. (2015). Planetary boundaries: Guiding human development on a changing planet. *Science*, 347(6223). <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1259855>
36. Strelnyk, O. (2023). Gender, citizenship, and war: How Russia's war on Ukraine affects women's political rights. *Femina Politica – Zeitschrift für feministische Politikwissenschaft*, 32(1), 87–94. <https://doi.org/10.3224/feminapolitica.v32i1.07> [in Ukrainian]
37. Mokhnenko, A., Razumova, H., Brahina, O., Kryshchal, H., Skyba, H., Tsimoshynska, O., Volokhova, I., et al. (2025). Strategy for the recovery of deoccupied territories of Ukraine: Challenges of post-conflict development and ways to overcome them. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15190154> [in Ukrainian]
38. The United Nations. (2026). The 17 goals. Retrieved from: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
39. The United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. (1987). Our common future. Oxford University Press.
40. Vaughan, G. (2007). Women and the gift economy: A radically different worldview is possible. Inanna Publications and Education Inc.
41. Waring, M. (1988). If women counted: A new feminist economics. HarperCollins.