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SDGs – CENTRIC APPROACH TO STRATEGIC PLANNING OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The research of the community growth and the formation of strategies for their development in the context of an approach focused on achieving sustainable development goals have been conducted. The problems of the sustainable community development and their crucial understanding of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at all levels of management have been considered. The research is based on the hypothesis that taking into account the features of the Central

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ЦСР-ЦЕНТРИЧНИЙ ПІДХІД ДО СТРАТЕГІЧНОГО ПЛАНУВАННЯ РОЗВИТКУ ГРОМАД

Проведено дослідження розвитку громад і формування стратегій їхнього розвитку в контексті підходу, орієнтованого на досягнення цілей сталого розвитку. Розглянуто проблеми сталого розвитку громад та їх розуміння важливості досягнення цілей сталого розвитку (ЦСР) на всіх рівнях управління. В основу дослідження покладено гіпотезу, що врахування особливостей ЦСР-центричного підходу до стратегічного планування розвитку



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Development Center approach to the strategic planning of the community development in Ukraine will lead to the improvement of sustainable development indicators at the current stage of the community growth and the sustainable development of Ukraine. Such research methods were used, as: assessment of qualitative, quantitative and social indicators, as well as methods of positional analysis, focus groups, diagnostic interviews, expert assessments, measurement and comparison, system analysis and modeling. The basic concepts and components of sustainable development were analyzed. It has been proposed to define the features of the Central Development Center-centered approach to the strategic planning of community development. The role of intersectoral cooperation between local authorities, business and civil society in the context of achieving the SDGs was considered in detail. The article focuses on the integration of environmental, social and economic aspects into strategic planning, and explores the problems and challenges faced by communities in implementing these approaches. The importance of building the institutional capacity of communities for the effective implementation of the SDGs and their adaptation to the changing conditions of the post-war period was separately emphasized. Recommendations were given for improving the methods of monitoring and evaluating the SDGs achievement at the local level. It is substantiated that only in the presence of a high-quality strategy, joint efforts and mutual understanding of all stakeholders it is possible to achieve the goal of "rebuilding better than it was". It was emphasized that the reconstruction of the country should be carried out by joint efforts, on the basis of transparency, innovation and strategic vision. The leadership role of communities in the Ukrainian post-war reconstruction was defined, the significance of state regional policy and the Road Map adoption of decentralization, as well as the consideration of the need to achieve the sustainable development goals in communities, were revealed. The ranking of the sustainable development goals for the communities of Vinnytsia was carried out.

Keywords: sustainable development, sustainable development goals, community development strategy, strategic planning, post-war reconstruction, sustainable recovery.

JEL Classification: R12, R58, Q56.

Introduction

Theoretical studies of the issue have proven that the concept of "sustainable development" has a rather wide range of interpretations. For the

громад в Україні приведе до покращення індикаторів сталого розвитку на сучасному етапі функціонування громад і до сталого розвитку України. Методологія дослідження містить: оцінку якісних, кількісних і соціальних показників, а також методи позиційного аналізу, фокус-групи, діагностичного інтерв'ювання, експертних оцінок, вимірювання та порівняння, системного аналізу та моделювання. Проаналізовано базові поняття і складові сталого розвитку. Запропоновано визначення особливостей ЦСР-центричного підходу до стратегічного планування розвитку громад. Детально розглянуто роль міжсекторальної співпраці між місцевими органами влади, бізнесом і громадянським суспільством у контексті досягнення ЦСР. Акцентовано на інтеграції екологічних, соціальних та економічних аспектів у стратегічне планування, а також досліджено проблеми та виклики, з якими стикаються громади під час впровадження цих підходів. Окремо наголошено на важливості розбудови інституційної спроможності громад для ефективної реалізації ЦСР та їх адаптації до змінних умов повоєнного періоду. Надано рекомендації щодо вдосконалення методик моніторингу й оцінювання досягнення ЦСР на місцевому рівні. Обґрунтовано, що лише за наявності якісної стратегії, об'єднаних зусиль і взаєморозуміння всіх стейкхолдерів можливе досягнення мети "відбудувати краще, ніж було". Акцентовано на тому, що відбудова країни має здійснюватися спільними зусиллями, на засадах прозорості, інновацій та стратегічного бачення. Визначено лідерську роль громад у післявоєнній відбудові України, розкрито значення державної регіональної політики та прийняття Дорожньої карти децентралізації, а також врахування потреби досягнення цілей сталого розвитку у громадах. Проведено ранжування цілей сталого розвитку для громад Вінниччини.

Ключові слова: сталий розвиток, цілі сталого розвитку, стратегія розвитку громади, стратегічне планування, повоєнна відбудова, стале відновлення.

first time, this concept was proposed by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, in the Brundtland report, where it was determined that "...development that meets the needs of the present, but does not jeopardize the ability of future generations to meet their own needs in the future" (Gerald & Filipenko, 2003). Sustainable or sustainable development is a general concept that involves the need to establish a balance between meeting the current needs of humanity and protecting the interests of future generations, in particular, their need for a safe and healthy environment (Shvorak et al., 2022). Datsenko (2023) studied the conceptual foundations of the problems of sustainable development of the national economy of Ukraine. In recent years, in scientific works on regional economy and management, emphasis on increasing the efficiency of social and economic growth has been transferred to the local level, which is due to the spread of the decentralization theory of management in the countries of the world (Pavlikha et al., 2022). Therefore, the study of the development of communities and the formation of strategies for their development in the context of an approach focused on achieving the goals of sustainable development (hereinafter referred to as the SDGs-centric approach) require detailed study and implementation.

Panchyshyn and Vdovin (2023) studied the components of sustainable development of territorial communities and regions under the conditions of social and political challenges. Derun and Kocherga (2021), O. Vasylieva and N. Vasylieva (2018) considered the features of strategic planning for the sustainable development of territorial communities. Scientists T. Fesenko and G. Fesenko (2020) studied the innovative environment of the city as a factor in the sustainable development of the community. The work of Dynnyk (2023) is devoted to the strategizing of regional development under martial law. In turn, Kovalenko (2018) analyzed the state and prospects for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Ukraine. In the work of Radzihovska et al. (2023) determined the peculiarities of evaluating the results of regional development programs in Ukraine. Among modern foreign scientists, we can single out the publication of Clement et al. (2023), where the smart grid strategy is considered as a driver of local achievement of the SDGs. Also noteworthy is the work of Conroy and Wilson (2024) on revising sustainable development planning in light of contemporary changes and human needs.

According to the Mapping Innovations Patents and the Sustainable Development Goals (2024) research on technological industries, there is a relationship between, for example, goals such as SDG 9 "Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure" and SDG 3 "Strong health and well-being". At the same time, each SDG covers a variety of technologies aimed at achieving the respective goal, although there is some duplication, for example,

"Reducing greenhouse gas emissions" appears in both SDG 9 "Industry, innovation and infrastructure" and SDG 13 "Combating climate change" (Figure 1).

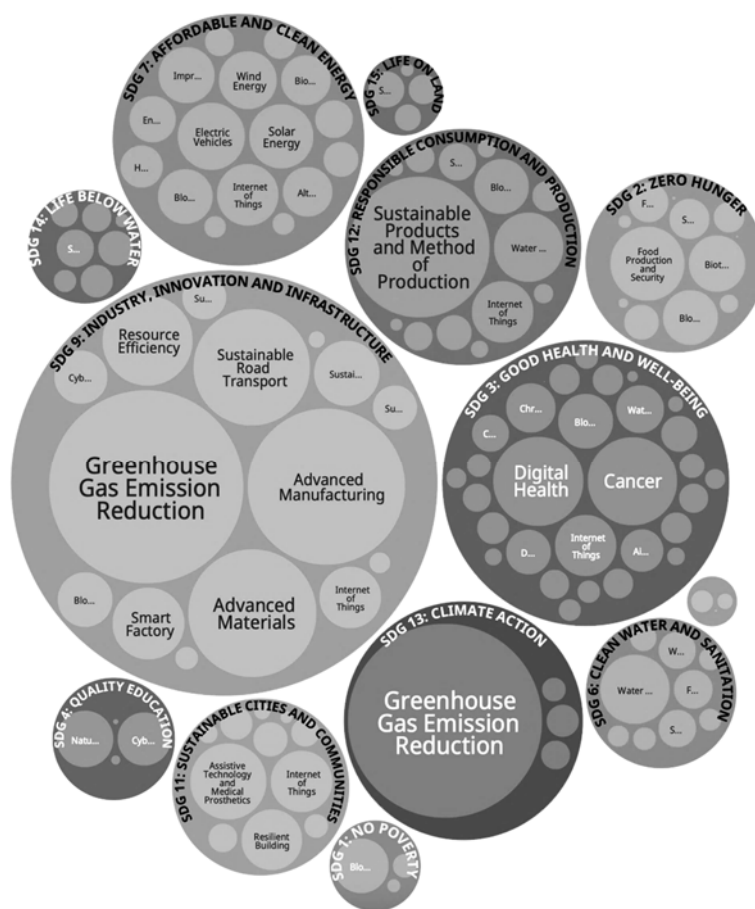


Figure 1. Study of 100 technologies related to the SDGs

Source: (Mapping Innovations Patents and the Sustainable Development Goals, 2024).

Despite active research on the specifics of strategic planning for the achievement of the SDGs, issues of the specifics of planning the achievement of the SDGs remain outside the attention of domestic scientists, not at the global, but at the regional and local levels, namely at the level of regions and communities. It is also important that the strategies and programs of social and economic development of different levels do not duplicate each other and do not have a fragmentary nature, complementing the implementation of local strategies for the implementation of national and global strategies, in particular in the field of Central Development.

The aim of the research is to develop proposals for taking into account the features of the Central Committee-centered approach to the strategic planning of the development of communities in Ukraine and the achievement of sustainable development indicators at the current stage of the functioning of communities on the example of the communities of Vinnytsia.

The research is based on the scientific assumption that taking into account the features of the Central Committee-centered approach to the strategic planning of the development of communities in Ukraine will lead to the improvement of indicators of sustainable development at the current stage of the functioning of communities and to the sustainable development of Ukraine.

The theoretical and methodological foundations of the research were the works of domestic and foreign scientists regarding the concept and features of strategic planning, the specifics of community development, as well as inclusion in the program documents of the Central Development Program and the development of indicators of their achievement. The research used the assessment of qualitative, quantitative and social indicators, as well as the methods of positional analysis, focus groups, diagnostic interviews, expert assessments, measurement and comparison, system analysis and modeling.

The main part of the article consists of three sections, which consistently consider the issue of the essence of the SDGs-centric approach to the formation of program documents in communities, determine the degree of correlation of the SDG with the strategic goals of communities, provide suggestions for taking into account the SDGs-centric approach to the strategic planning of community development in the context of sustainable restoration of Ukraine.

1. The essence of the SDGs-centric approach to the development of program documents in communities

At the regional and local levels, appropriate sustainable development strategies of regions and individual cities already exist and will continue to be adopted, but they do not take into account all the Goals of global sustainable development and SDGs for Ukraine, in particular, as their modern legal framework does not take into account. Local strategies are a document of public agreement, ideally a mutually beneficial contract signed by its participants, who thereby accept obligations for its implementation (Derun & Kocherga, 2021). Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of the SDGs in strategic documents at the local level, in particular at the level of territorial communities, is a complex but inevitable process. In this context, it is worth emphasizing the importance of the 17 goals of sustainable development "Partnership for sustainable development" and involving local authorities, active public and business in this process.

In general, *a strategic plan* is a long-term program (roughly 8–12 years) for the city community to achieve an independently set goal. The criterion of *long-term planning* means that the plan defines new opportunities (sources, volumes and structure of income and expenses), in contrast to a short-term (operational) plan, in which opportunities are predetermined (volumes and

structure of expenses are fixed in advance). The strategic plan consists of the Community Development Strategy and the Strategy Implementation Plan. *The community development strategy* (hereinafter referred to as the strategy) is a conceptual document that contains a vision of the future, development directions, and a target block of a number of strategic and operational goals.

Strategic planning is the implementation of a conscious choice: goals; means of solving problems (and/or realization of opportunities); the desired "scenario" of events (the desired "trajectory" of changes) with the possibility of consciously influencing this "scenario" during its implementation (Methodical recommendations, 2018).

Regarding the sequence of strategic planning, various scientists name from 5 to 7 different stages of strategy formation. However, in the context of this research, it is extremely important that the strategic and operational goals of the strategy should be aligned with existing community and regional (regional) strategies and specific programs. In addition, in our opinion, it is important to ensure the sustainability of the development of the community, however, it must be ensured in several aspects. Ensuring sustainability means allowing the process to continue for a long time.

So, *program sustainability* is the vitality and vigor of the process of learning and growth in the community. *Environmental sustainability* means the prosperity of the natural systems on which life on earth depends. *Social and cultural sustainability* is how development affects the social and cultural environment of people's existence. *Economic sustainability* means the continued provision of wealth and prosperity. Economic sustainable development, like biological development, increases the variety of strategies. Economic sustainability means not only production, but also the fair distribution of goods in such a way that all members of society can meet their basic needs. *Political stability* is a process of decision-making, establishment and distribution of power. The process of community development is not viable if the political forces opposing it are stronger than the political forces supporting it. Therefore, it is very important to enlist the support of organizations and leaders that influence the political and economic environment. The challenge for the development of communities is the harmonization of environmental, social, economic, political and cultural needs, and not the development of some types of needs thanks to others (16 principles, 2024).

2. Degree of correlation between the SDGs-centric and the strategic goals of communities

During December 2023, 2 focus groups were prepared and held with representatives of Vinnytsia communities within the framework of the project "Strengthened partnership for sustainable recovery" with the support of the Swedish government and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Ukraine (*Figure 2*).

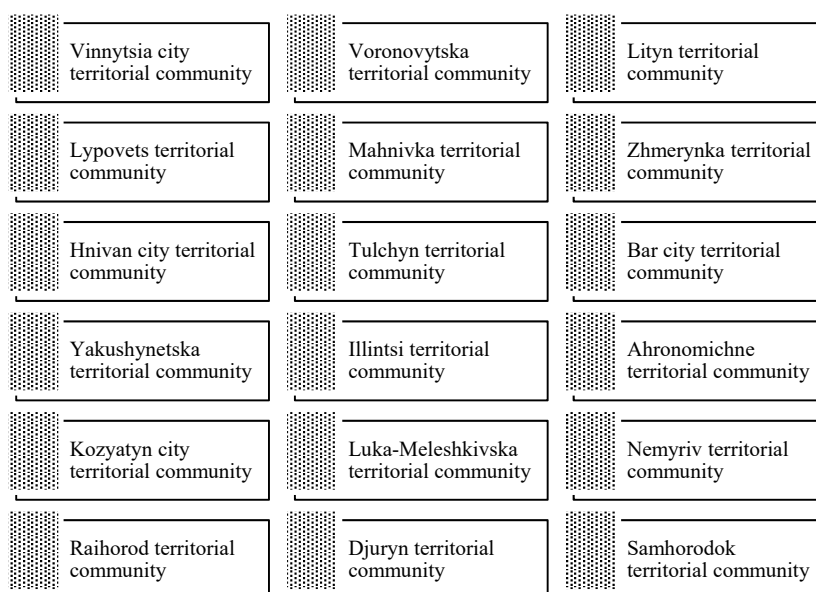


Figure 2. Representation of communities in Vinnytsia region in the focus group

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of the focus group results.

The focus group method as a form of moderated group discussion is a type of qualitative research (collection of qualitative data, verbal and non-verbal information), discussion of a certain topic with a small homogeneous group of representatives of the target audience under the guidance of a moderator. The quantitative composition of the focus groups is represented by 25–28 participants from 18 territorial communities of the Vinnytsia region. A focus group allows you to quickly obtain in-depth information; identify differences in understanding or perception of a certain problem, event or phenomenon, motivation. Focus groups are most often used to generate ideas, test hypotheses, clarify data, interpret results; studying the specifics of a certain situation (Ibrahimova, 2019).

In *Figure 2* it is shown that representatives of Vinnytsia communities took part in the discussion in two focus groups, mostly from Vinnytsia CTC, Stryzhavska TC, as well as from those quite far from the regional center, for example, Lypovetska TC, Barska CTC, Illinetska TC and others. Thanks to reaching the audience, the moderators tried to identify the problems and needs of the Vinnytsia communities in understanding the importance of a Central Development Strategy-centered approach to strategizing at the local level. Representatives of local self-government bodies and local executive bodies took part in the meetings. Belonging to local public authorities makes this target group homogeneous and relevant to the research objectives.

Another question that the participants discussed during the focus group was how well the respondents had information about the Global Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (*Figure 3*).

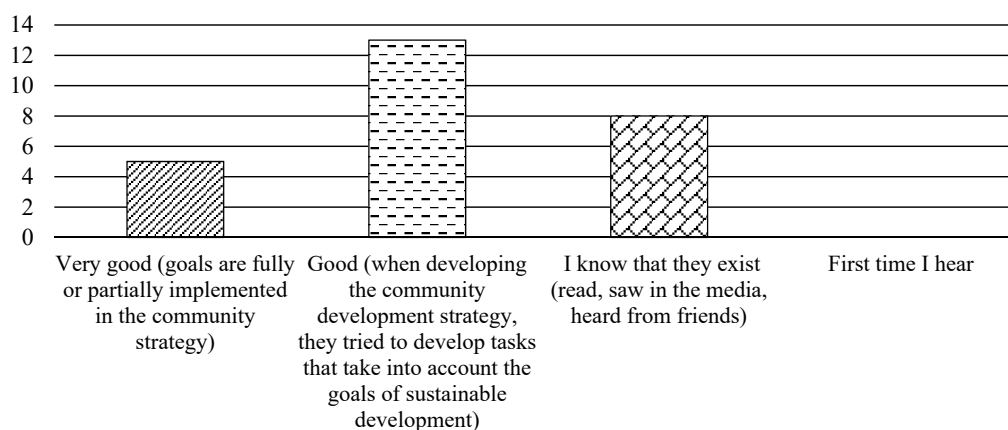


Figure 3. Distribution of focus group participants by level of awareness of the Global Sustainable Development Goals 2030

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of the results of the focus group.

Thus, 5 participants answered that "they are very well aware, the goals are fully or partially implemented in the community strategy. 13 participants noted that the knowledgeable "well, when developing a community development strategy, they tried to develop tasks that take into account the goals of sustainable development." 8 participants of the focus group noted that they know about the existence of the Central Bank and have read about them in the media. It is important that representatives of Vinnytsia communities who know nothing about the Central Committee were not identified.

The next stage of the research was the determination of the significance of the Central Bank for a specific community (Figure 4).

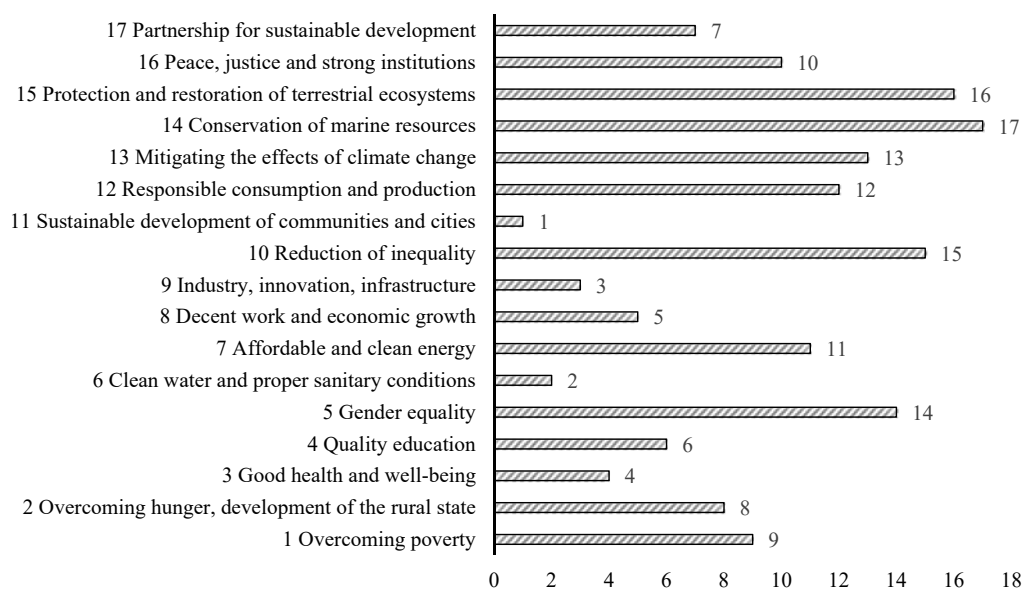


Figure 4. Importance of the Central Bank for your community

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of the results of the focus group.

Based on *Figure 4*, it can be concluded that, for the most part, for Vinnytsia communities, the most important SDGs are goal 11 "Sustainable development of cities and communities", goal 6 "Clean water and proper sanitary conditions", goal 9 "Industry, innovation and infrastructure".

At the same time, the focus group analyzed which SDGs are implemented in the strategy of the territorial community, so the following visualization is observed (*Figure 5*). In addition, participants could choose up to three answers to this question.

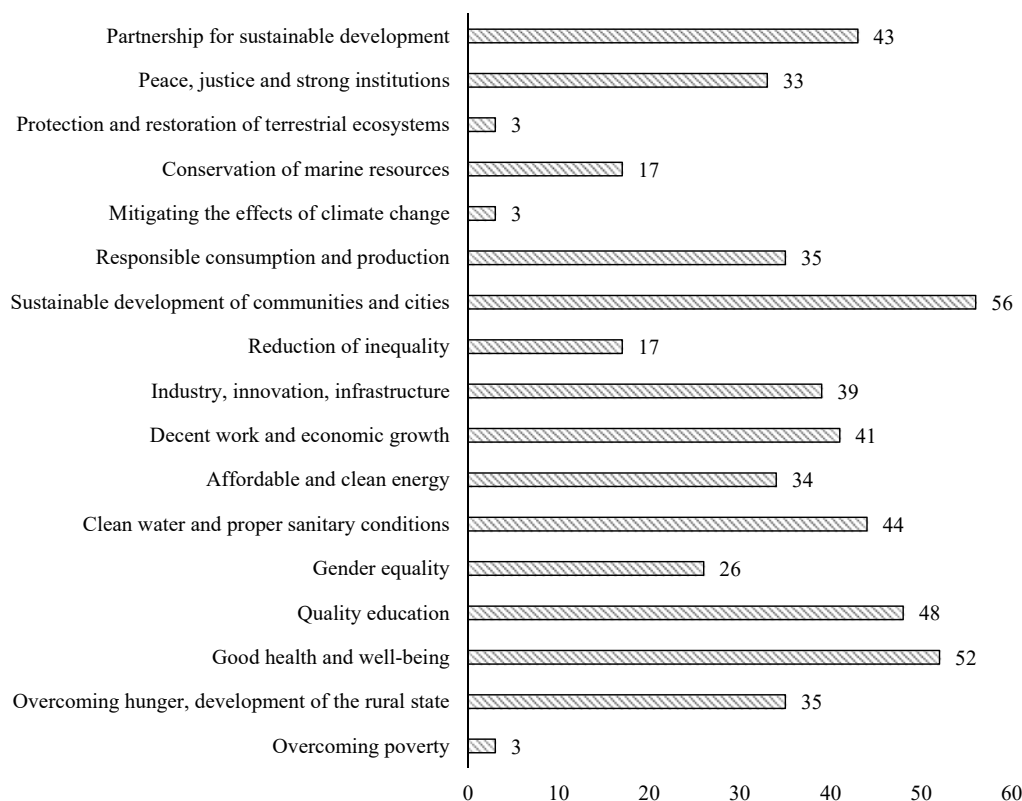


Figure 5. The CSR implementation of the TC development strategy, according to the results of the focus group, %

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of the focus group results

As it can be seen from *Figure 5*, the most implemented SDGs in existing community development strategies are goal 11 "Sustainable development of cities and communities", goal 3 "Strong health", goal 4 "Quality education". We propose to compare the SDGs that are most needed by Vinnytsia communities and which are the most implemented in order to understand whether the needs of the communities are met, and to identify gaps and needs for the formation of further recommendations. We assign a rating of 17 to the goals that received the most votes, and a rating of 1 to the goals that were considered the least relevant by the representatives of certain communities (*Figure 6*).

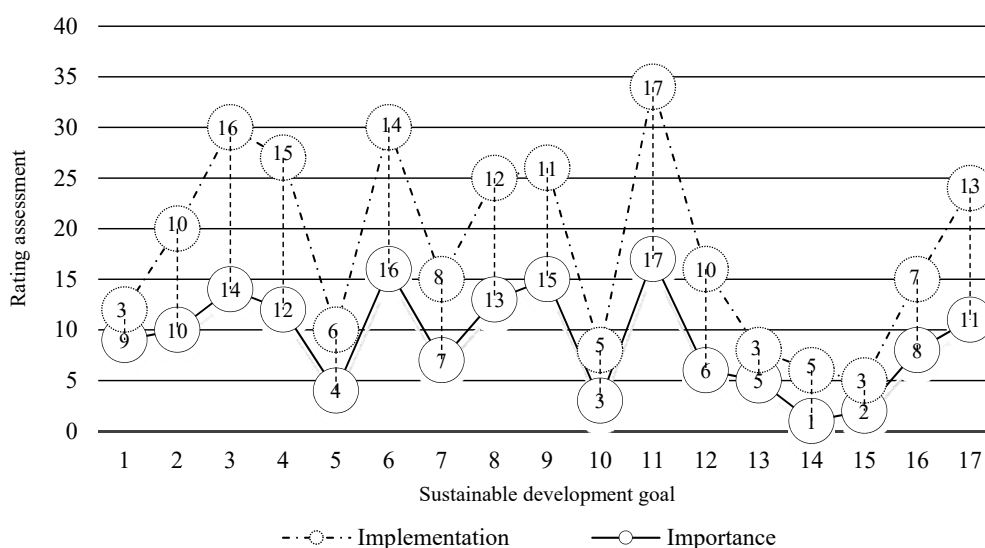


Figure 6. Correlation between the SDG importance for the community and the degree of their implementation in the development strategies of Vinnytsia communities

Source: compiled by the authors based on the analysis of the focus group results.

From *Figure 6*, it can be observed the ratio of important goals for the community and already implemented SDGs. So there is a logical relationship for almost all purposes. Needs and implementation correlate well for goals 2, 7, 8, 11, 16. However, we see unmet needs in other goals. Thus, according to goal 6 "Clean water and proper sanitary conditions", the need prevails over the implementation by 2 points; goal 9 "Industry, innovation and infrastructure" the identical difference is 4 points; goal 13 "Combating climate change" – a difference of 2 points. According to the focus group, the degree of implementation prevails over the defined need for other goals. Therefore, it can be concluded that the strategies of local development of Central and Eastern Europe (at different levels) somehow take into account or are determined by the need to solve problems of local importance. So the most important goals for the community (received the highest ranking scores) are goals 11, 6, 9, 3, 8 (in descending order). That is, these are 5 goals that community representatives consider the most important for their own communities.

It's considered how high the probability of their achievement is, according to the Voluntary National Review "Ukraine's Sustainable Development Goals" (2021). During the preparation of the Review for Ukraine, an innovative method for the country was used, namely: a methodology was developed and adapted for a detailed assessment of the state of achievement for each of the 17 goals according to national indicators. Based on the results of calculations using this methodology, analysis of calculation data and their comparison with the target values of benchmarks for achievement in 2020 (established in the basic Report on the Central Development Strategy), the goals were ranked according to the degree of probability

of achievement (high, medium, low, very low). Ukraine managed to ensure progress on 15 out of 17 goals (Voluntary National Review, 2021). This method has three consecutive steps: calculation of the actual average annual growth rate; calculation of the necessary (target/theoretical) growth rate to achieve the goal; calculation of the ratio of required and actual growth rates (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Ranking of goals according to the integral assessment of progress in CDS achieving, in the section of each according to the relevant indicators

Source: (Voluntary National Review, 2021).

So, according to the Voluntary National Review (2021) and according to Figure 7, it should be noted that goal 11 has weak positive dynamics that needs significant acceleration, goal 6 has positive dynamics that needs some acceleration, goal 9 is almost unattainable, has negative dynamics and a low probability of achievement, goal 3 is achieved or has a high probability of achievement, goal 8 is a positive dynamic that needs a certain acceleration.

3. Proposals for taking into account the SDGs-centric approach to the strategic planning of community development in the context of the sustainable recovery of Ukraine

The main task is to make local authorities, businesses, civil society organizations, and every member of society aware of the necessity, expediency, and significance of the CDS implementation in the process of strategic planning and programming (Derun & Kocherga, 2021). The process of CDS integration into local strategic documents has several stages:

- conducting information companies, trainings, focus groups, information sessions on the importance of SDG achieving till 2030 at all levels of management;
- goals coordination of local strategies with the Central Development Strategy, determination of priorities in solving problems of local importance, taking into account the threefold essence of sustainable development;
- integration of program documents with work plans of relevant public administration bodies and other stakeholders, effective partnership;
- transparency and reporting on CDS achievement and fulfillment of set tasks. Informing the public and involving it at all stages of interaction.

It should also be remembered that communities act as an important factor in ensuring harmony between economic, social and ecological development, according to the Roadmap presented by the Ministry of Community Development, Territories and Infrastructure of Ukraine regarding the continuation of the reform of local self-government and territorial organization of power in Ukraine (Decentralization Roadmap, 2024).

The decentralization roadmap provides for taking into account the requirements for the activities of local government bodies, so that they meet European standards and principles of good governance. Also among the main tasks of the continuation of the decentralization reform: the creation and use of local statistics, the collection of accurate digital data, the improvement of the system of public consultations and internal control, strengthening the financial stability and efficiency of local communities, including tax reform, as well as the development of urban associations, etc. The decentralization roadmap is aimed at carrying out reforms in the coming years. This document must comply with the State Strategy for Regional Development until 2027 and the Development Plan of Ukraine. Therefore, communities as leaders of reconstruction will have the characteristics defined in *Figure 8*.

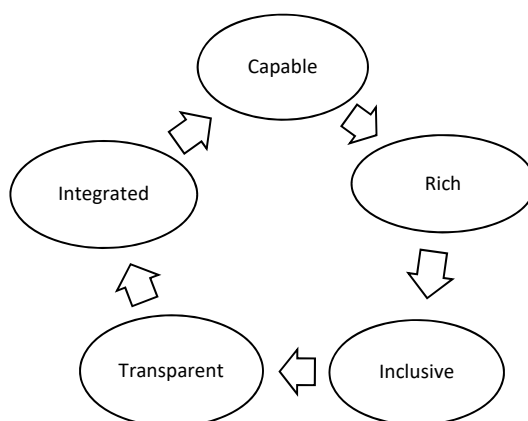


Figure 8. Signs of communities are leaders of reconstruction

Source: (Decentralization Roadmap, 2024).

These features of the community should serve as the basis for the reconstruction of Ukraine on the basis of sustainable development, and the communities should be the leaders of this process. Each community can use these principles as a way for its own reconstruction and development. Characteristics of a capable community are the main indicators that determine the effectiveness and sustainability of local communities in their development and functioning.

An important aspect of a community sustainable development strategy is the adaptation of goals to the conditions caused by war and taking into account the consequences of destruction and damage. The Recovery Plan of Ukraine, which has 15 national programs, is becoming a key tool for

achieving sustainable development, as it takes into account and responds to the country's basic needs in the context of the conflict and the recovery process. Adapted sustainable development goals will contribute to the effective integration of national efforts in the restoration and creation of sustainable and developed communities (Bondar, 2023).

In difficult circumstances, but with the support of international partners, such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Ukraine adopts the concept of "Build Back Better" or BBB (Build Back Better), (UN Program, 2024).

According to the analysis of the importance of the goals of sustainable development for representatives of the communities of Vinnytsia (based on the data of *Figure 4, 6*), the third chapter of the publication focuses on the concept of "Restore better than it was". Communities, in particular, identify Sustainable Development Goal 11 "Sustainable development of cities and communities" as important, but progress remains limited. In our opinion, active efforts of all stakeholders are needed to achieve the goals, especially in the context of environmental challenges and emergency management. It is impossible to ignore both the economic block of the problem (because the economic base of the development of the community and society can become the basis for achieving other goals of sustainable development), and the social component (the citizen usually does not care who provides the services, the main thing is that those services are of high quality, accessible and inclusive, took into account the needs of all interested parties and were comfortable when receiving the service, as well as in the process of living in a certain area).

Conclusions

A SDGs-centric approach to the reconstruction of Ukraine and community development is important because of the complexity of solving development problems, including economic development, social stability, environmental protection, and the establishment of peace and justice. Each goal is important in the general context, but success in achieving them is possible only under the condition of interaction and cooperation at all levels of management, as evidenced by the goal of sustainable development 17. In the research, we have identified the features of the SDGs-centric approach to strategic planning of community development, analyzed the level of achievement Central Committee in Vinnytsia communities, identified weak points that should be paid attention to in order to update local strategies and formed an evidence base for proving the hypothesis based on the research.

A number of proposals have been developed taking into account the indicators of sustainable development at the current stage of community functioning. During the research, it was found that the most important goals for Vinnytsia communities are: 11 "Sustainable development of cities and communities", 6 "Clean water and proper sanitary conditions"; 9 "Industry, innovation and infrastructure", 3 "Strong health and well-being", 8 "Decent

work and economic growth". However, it has been proven, according to the Voluntary National Review "Ukraine's Sustainable Development Goals" (2021), that the degree of their achievement remains different: from positive dynamics that need to be accelerated (goal 8) to almost unattainable (goal 9). In view of the above, local public administration bodies are recommended to record in their program documents the achievement of these goals and relevant indicators for the sustainable development of communities and Ukraine in general.

Thus, community development strategies must be updated and worked out in accordance with changing conditions and available resources, taking into account external and internal risks. Without a quality strategy, joint efforts and understanding, it will be impossible to achieve the goal of "Rebuilding better than it was". Therefore, communities need to have information about existing strengths and growth points, take responsibility for their development and rebuild the country with joint efforts, based on transparency, innovation and strategic vision.

Further research will be concerned with monitoring and evaluating how effective updated community development strategies are in conditions of instability and what factors influence their successful implementation. It is also worth investigating innovative methods and tools that can be used by communities in managing external and internal risks, in particular, how communities can predict and minimize the impact of these risks on their development.

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