

### Long Abstract – Monographic Section

*SOCIAL AGRICULTURE BETWEEN NEW AND OLD SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES, THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND POLICY INNOVATIONS.*

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#### *Cultivating Rights. Farmers in Burkina Faso, Italy and Senegal*

Melissa Morello

The author examines the role of women farmers in Italy, Burkina Faso, and Senegal, highlighting the socioeconomic and cultural differences influencing their working conditions and contributions to agricultural and social development. Using the capability approach and an intersectional lens, the research explores gender inequalities in access to resources, education, and microcredit, emphasizing the marginalization and invisibility of women's agricultural labor. Drawing on twenty-one qualitative interviews and quantitative data, the study highlights the resilience and empowerment strategies adopted by women farmers to overcome challenges, balance work and family life, and foster innovation and sustainability.

The comparative analysis reveals substantial national differences in structural conditions, but also a common thread of resistance and adaptability. In Italy, agriculture is increasingly associated with entrepreneurial opportunity and multifunctionality, while in Burkina Faso and Senegal, it represents a fundamental response to economic hardship, food insecurity, and climate stress. Across all contexts, women face the dual burden of productive and reproductive labor, often without adequate institutional support.

Despite barriers such as illiteracy, limited land access, and gender bias, women demonstrate strong agency through informal networks, microcredit schemes, and local innovations. Their agricultural work not only contributes to household livelihoods, but also strengthens biodiversity, food security, and ecological resilience.

The study argues that investing in women's capabilities is both a matter of equity and a strategic pathway to sustainable development. It underscores the need for gender-transformative policies, locally rooted data collection, and participatory approaches that incorporate women's voices and lived experiences. Women farmers emerge as agents of change, reshaping agriculture and society through their empowerment.

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