



Securing land rights for the world's poorest



In the small, rural village of Theetha in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, Padma beams with pride. In 1993, Padma's local government provided her with a micro-plot of land – and her life changed forever.

Before she became a micro-land owner, Padma worked as a day laborer in the fields of others. She earned only 8 rupees a day (about 18 cents) when work was available. When asked how she was able to feed her family on such a paltry income, she simply said, "I couldn't."

Rather than growing fruits and vegetables on her new micro-plot, Padma had another plan. Celebrations and festivals are frequent in India, and flowers are commonly used for those festivals. Padma surmised that because her new microplot was close to a local temple, a flower business would bring in high profits. She took a risk and bought as many jasmine seeds as her budget could afford. Soon Padma's hopes blossomed.

Today, Padma earns up to 200 rupees (about \$4.50) a day selling flowers. With the income from her business, she was able to take her children out of the fields and put them into the classroom. Her daughters have an education and a future full of possibility.

From desperate poverty, malnutrition and no hope of education for her children, Padma's family is now happy and secure. RDI's micro-land ownership program in India is providing thousands of women like Padma with the same opportunities.

For Padma, a little bit of land truly made a BIG difference.

*From Poverty to Prosperity . . .
Padma's Story*