

Towards Tribal Empowerment through Producer Collective: The Case of Shreyas Tribal Farmer Producer Company Ltd.

Sreeram Vishnu¹, Allan Thomas² and Archana Bhatt³

¹*Assistant Professor, Regional Agricultural Research Station, Ambalavayal, Wayanad, Kerala Agricultural University*

²*Programme Coordinator and Assistant Professor, KVK, Wayanad*

³*Scientist, CabC, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Wayanad*

1. Shreyas Tribal Farmer Producer Company: How it all Started?

Mr. Lineesh is a farmer from the Kuruma tribal community in the Wayanad district of Kerala. Unlike most of his community members, who work either as farmers or agricultural labourers, he has worked with an NGO in Wayanad viz. *Shreyas* for the past seven years. With his degree in BA in Politics, he started his career with the NGO as a community organiser to work with native tribal communities. His responsibilities include mobilising rural youth clubs, coordinating the activities of Self-Help Groups of *Shreyas*, watershed development programmes, and Save a Family—a tribal livelihood support plan. Of the total one hundred and sixty tribal colonies in which the NGO focused its interventions, forty colonies were managed by Mr. Lineesh. Besides, he is a practicing farmer and cultivates coffee, spice crops and vegetables. However, his role and responsibility changed over the last two years, when the NGO floated its own Shreyas Tribal Farmer Producer Company (STFPC) in 2018. He is presently functioning as the MD of the organisation of the tribal producers supported by *Shreyas*.