CHAPTER III

PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA AND SELECT SCHEDULED TRIBE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN WAYANAD DISTRICT
PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA AND SELECT SCHEDULED TRIBE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN WAYANAD DISTRICT

The geographical area covered by the present study is the revenue district of Wayanad in Kerala State. The name Wayanad is derived from the word ‘Wayalnadu’, meaning the land of paddy fields. It is situated in an elevated picturesque mountainous plateau on the crest of the Western Ghats on a height between 700 and 2100 metres above the sea level. With its vast area of greenery, spice scented breeze, mist capped mountains and hypnotising scenic beauty, Wayanad District stands its head high as one of the loveliest hill stations of Kerala.

The present Wayanad District was carved out from the parts of Kozhikode and Kannur Districts and came into existence on 1st November, 1980 as the 12th district of Kerala. It is bounded on the east by Nilgiris and Mysore District of Tamilnadu and Karnataka respectively, on the north Coorg District of Karnataka, on the south by Malappuram and on the west by Kozhikode and Kannur Districts.
Area and Population

The total geographical area of Wayanad District is 2131 sq. kms., which accounts for 5.48 per cent of the total area of the Kerala State. Wayanad District lies on the southern top of the Deccan Plateau and its chief glory is the majestic Western Ghats with lofty ridges interspersed with dense forest, tangled jungles and deep valleys. The terrain is rugged.

In the centre of the district, hills are lower in height, while the northern area has high hills and they give a wild and mountainous appearance. The major peaks are Vellarimala, Banasura and Chembra. The eastern area is flat and open. The low hills are full of plantations like tea, coffee, pepper and cardamom while the valleys have a predominance of paddy fields. The soil of the Wayanad District is mainly of the forest type. The forest area in the district is 78787 hectares.

Climate

The Wayand District has a salubrious climate. The normal rainfall in the district is 3280.8 mm. Lakkidi, Vythri and Meppadi are the high rainfall area in Wayanad District. Lakkadi gets the highest average rainfall in Kerala.
Population

Wayanad is the least populated district in Kerala. As per 2001 census, the total population of Wayanad District stood at 780619, which constituted 2.45 per cent of the total population of Kerala. The population density per square kilometre is 366 and the sex ratio (number of females per 1000 males) is 995.

The Wayanad District has the highest concentration of tribals in Kerala. According to 2001 census, the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in Wayand District stood at 136062 which constituted 37.36 per cent of the total ST population in the state. The major tribes in Wayanad are Paniyan, Adiyan, Kurichiyan, Kuruman, Kattunayakan and Uraly. The maximum concentration of tribals (11178) is in the Thirunelly Grama Panchayat.

The Panchayat wise ST population in Wayanad District is presented in Table 3.1
Table 3.1

Panchayat wise Distribution of ST Population in Wayanad District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SI No.</th>
<th>Name of Panchayat/ Municipality</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Thirunelly</td>
<td>5431</td>
<td>5747</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Thavinhal</td>
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<td>2899</td>
<td>5720</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>5012</td>
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<td>2496</td>
<td>4894</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Noolpuzha</td>
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<td>5109</td>
<td>10288</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>3047</td>
<td>6035</td>
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<td>Meenangadi</td>
<td>3518</td>
<td>3581</td>
<td>7099</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Mutttil</td>
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<td>4562</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Padincharethara</td>
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<td>Thariode</td>
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<td>2649</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pozhuthana</td>
<td>1594</td>
<td>1672</td>
<td>3266</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Vythiri</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Meppadi</td>
<td>1768</td>
<td>1748</td>
<td>3516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Muppainadu</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Kalpetta Municipality</td>
<td>1478</td>
<td>1650</td>
<td>3128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>67394</td>
<td>68668</td>
<td>136062</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Census 2001*
Administration

For the purpose of revenue administration the Wayanad District is divided into three Taluks, namely, Sulthan Bathery, Vythiri and Mananthavady. There are 25 Grama Panchayats in Wayanad District. There is only one Municipality (Kalpetta) in Wayanad District. Kalpetta is the headquarters of the Wayanad District Administration.

Agriculture

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in Wayanad. The major crops cultivated in the Wayanad District are Coffee, Tea, Pepper, Ginger, Cardamom, Paddy and Rubber. The backbone of the economy of Wayanad District is the plantation crops – Tea, Coffee, Pepper and Rubber. Banana and Coconut are also cultivated in the district.

Industry

The Wayanad District is an industrially backward district in Kerala. There is no major industrial unit in Wayanad District. But some small scale agro based industrial units, timber based industries, garment making units, engineering units, building materials units, leather bag manufacturing units and bio-fertiliser units are functioning in the district.
Transport

Railway facility is not available in the district. The nearest railway station is at Kozhikode, about 70 kms. from Kalpetta. The only mode of transport of goods within the district is roadways. Bus services are available in all Panchayats in the district. The Kozhikode – Mysore frontier road and Thalassery – Baveli road are the two important district roads.

Profile of the Scheduled Tribe Co-operative Societies Selected for the Study

The twelve ST Co-operative Societies selected for the present study are

1. Sulthan Bathery Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited (SBSTSCS)
2. Pulpally Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited (PSTSCS)
3. Kalpetta Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited (KSTSCS)
4. Thirunelly Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited (TSTSCS)
5. Panamaram Scheduled Tribe Service C-operative Society Limited (PMSTSCS)

6. Meppadi Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited (MSTSCS)

7. Thavinhal Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited (TLSTSCS)

8. Makkutty Girijan Brick Workers’ Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (MGBWICS)

9. Wayanad Adivasi Women Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (WAWICS)

10. Thrissilery Adivasi Handloom Weavers’ Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (TAHWICS)

11. Kottathara Adivasi Brick Workers’ Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (KABWICS)

12. Vythiri Taluk Adivasi Vanitha Karakausala Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (VTAVKICS)

The date of registration and commencement of business of the select societies are given in Table 3.2.
Table 3.2

Date of Registration and Commencement of Business of the Select Societies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SI No.</th>
<th>Name of Society</th>
<th>Date of registration</th>
<th>Date of Commencement of business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SBSTSCS</td>
<td>8.1.1959</td>
<td>13.2.1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PSTSCS</td>
<td>23.3.1972</td>
<td>26.3.1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>KSTSCS</td>
<td>16.3.1972</td>
<td>19.3.1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PMSTSCS</td>
<td>8.1.1976</td>
<td>31.1.1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>MSTSCS</td>
<td>3.3.1976</td>
<td>4.3.1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>TLSTSCS</td>
<td>24.6.1976</td>
<td>31.7.1976</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>MGBWICS</td>
<td>23.6.1983</td>
<td>22.7.1983</td>
</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>WAWICS</td>
<td>21.3.1984</td>
<td>29.8.1984</td>
</tr>
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<td>12</td>
<td>VTAVKICS</td>
<td>21.1.1995</td>
<td>27.2.1995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Records of select Societies

**Sulthan Bathery Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited (SBSTSCS)**

The oldest ST Co-operative Society functioning in Wayanad District is the SBSTSCS which was established on 8th January, 1959. The Society commenced business on 13th February, 1959. The Society
was originally established as a Forest Labourers’ Co-operative Society. As on 31.3.2004, the society had completed 45 years of service to the tribals. The society had a total membership of 1450 as on 31.3.2004. However the number of participating members was only 262. The total paid up share capital of the society as on 31.3.2004 amounted to Rs. 352640. The area of operation of the society extends to the two Panchayats – Sulthan Bathery and Noolpuzha in Wayanad District.

The main activity of the society is collection and sale of Minor Forest Produce (MFP). The sale of the MFP collected by the society is made through the Kerala State Federation of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Development Co-operatives Ltd (SC/ST Federation). The society is also running a consumer store and a retail Ayurveda Medicine selling unit. The society could not commence all the activities stated as its objectives in the bye-laws. The forest range allotted to the society for the purpose of MFP collection is about 20 Kilometres away from the Head office of the society. The society has a full time paid secretary. The main office of the society is functioning in a concrete building owned by the society. The society has also constructed one MFP godown. The society is functioning under the administrative control of the Department
of Co-operation, Kerala. For the purpose of the present study the society is included in the category of MFP societies.

The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of nine elected and two ex officio members. Of the nine elected members, one member is a lady.

**Pulpally Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited**

**(PSTSCS)**

The PSTSCS was registered on 23.3.1972 and commenced business on 26.3.1972. The total membership of the society as on 31.3.2004 stood at 541 and the total paid up share capital was Rs. 226360.

The main activity of the society is collection and sale of MFP. The society also runs a Tailoring centre, Subscriber Trunk Dialling (STD) Booth and a Flour mill. The area of operation of the society includes the three panchayats— Pulpally, Poothadi and Mullankolly. The society functions under the administrative control of the Department of Co-operation, Kerala. The society has a full-time paid secretary.

The management of the society is carried on by the Board of Directors consisting of nine members. Of the nine Directors, six are elected and three are ex officio members. Of the six elected Directors
one is a lady member. For the purpose of the present study the society is included in the category of MFP societies.

Kalpetta Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited

(KSTSCS)

The KSTSCS was registered on 16.3.1972 and started functioning on 19.3.1972. The area of operation of the society is limited to Kalpetta Municipality. The society had a total membership of 831 as on 31.3.2004. The activities of the society include running consumer store, tailoring unit, type writing class and giving small credit. As on 31.3.2004, the paid up share capital of the society amounted to Rs. 134172. The society is functioning in a rented building.

The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of five elected and two ex officio members. A full-time paid secretary has been appointed. The society is functioning under the administrative control of the Department of Co-operation, Kerala. For the purpose of the present study the society is included in the category of General societies.
**Thirunelly Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited**

*(TSTSCS)*

The TSTSCS was registered on 3.12.1975 and it commenced business on 18.12.1975. Its membership as on 31.3.2004 was 795 and it had a paid up share capital of Rs. 249330. The principal activity of the society is collection of MFP from the Begur and Tolpetty forest ranges. The sale of the MFP collected by the society is made through the Kerala State Federation of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Development Co-operatives Ltd. During some years in the study period, the society was found carrying on ginger cultivation. Though the objectives of the society as per its bye-laws include many activities, the society is carrying on only very limited number of activities.

The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of six elected and three ex officio members. The society has a full-time paid secretary and four MFP collection agents. The society also runs a retail selling unit near the famous Thirunelly temple. The society functions under the administrative control of the Department of Co-operation, Kerala. For the purpose of this research, the society is included in the category of MFP societies.
Panamaram Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited

(PMSTSCS)

The PMSTSCS came into existence on 8.1.1976. The area of operation is confined to the Panamaram Grama Panchayat. Although the society was registered with many objectives, it is observed that the society carries on very limited activities which include running a Photostat unit, Auto rickshaw transport service and giving small credit. The total number of members in the society as on 31.3.2004 stood at 791 and the total paid up share capital was Rs. 236452.

The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of five elected and two ex officio members. The society functions under the administrative control of the Department of Co-operation, Kerala. The present study has included the society in the category of General societies.

Meppadi Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited

(MSTSCS)

The MSTSCS was registered on 3.3.1976 and it commenced business on 4.3.1976. The society had a total membership of 1180 as on 31.3.2004. The paid up share capital of the society stood at Rs. 127944
as on 31.3.2004. The area of operation of the society extends to Muttil, Meppadi and Muppainad Panchayats in Wayanad District.

The principal activities of the society include collection and sale of MFP. The sale of the MFP collected by the society is made through the Kerala State Federation of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Co-operatives Ltd. The society also runs a computer training centre. The society owns two Tractors and one Tiller. The forest range allotted to the society is located at a distance of about thirty kilometres from the Head office of the society. The society owns one MFP godown. The Tractors and Tiller are leased to outsiders on an annual rent of Rs. 30000.

The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of seven elected and two ex officio members. The main office of the society is located at Thrikkaiapetta. The society has a full-time paid secretary. For the purpose of the present study the society is included in the category of MFP societies.

**Thavinhoal Scheduled Tribe Service Co-operative Society Limited**

*(TLSTSCS)*

The TLSTSCS was registered on 24.6.1976 and it commenced its business on 31.7.1976. As on 31.3.2004, the society had a total
membership of 1061. The paid up capital on 31.3.2004 amounted to Rs. 48461. The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of six elected and three ex officio members.

The main activity of the society include collection and sale of MFP. The sale of the MFP collected by the society is made through the Kerala State Federation of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Development Co-operatives Ltd. The society has been allotted two forest ranges – Mananthavadi and Perya for MFP collection. The society also carried on a consumer store for some years. For the purpose of the present study this society has been included in the category of MFP societies.

**Makkutty Girijan Brick Workers’ Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (MGBWICS)**

The MGBWICS was registered on 23.6.1983 and it commenced its activities on 22.7.1983. As on 31.3.2004, the society’s membership remained at 75 and its paid up share capital on 31.3.2004 was Rs. 402000. The area of operation of the society is the Nenmeni Panchayat. The society is engaged in the manufacturing of soil bricks.
Though the bye-laws of the society contain many objectives, the society could start only one activity- manufacturing of soil bricks.

The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of seven members. The society owns an office building and has a full-time paid secretary. For the purpose of the present study, the society is included in the category of Industrial societies. The administrative control of the society is vested with the Department of Industries, Kerala.

**Wayanad Adivasi Women Industrial Co-operative Society Limited**

(WAWICS)

The WAWICS was registered on 21.3.1984. It commenced its activities on 29.8.1984. The area of operation the society is the entire Wayanad District. As on 31.3.2004, the society’s membership was 41 and its paid up capital on 31.3.2004 amounted to Rs. 170000. The society is managed by its Board of Directors consisting of seven members. It is functioning under the administrative control of Department of Industries, Kerala.

Although the bye-laws of the society include many objectives, the society has been confining its activities only in running one printing press
at Meenangadi. The society employs one male full-time secretary. Originally the society was started to run as an assembling unit of the Kerala State Electronics Development Corporation. Later the society started a printing press and it has become the principal activity of the society. The society is included in the category of Industrial societies.

**Thrissilery Adivasi Handloom Weavers’ Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (TAHWICS)**

The TAHWICS was registered on 31.12.1985 and it commenced business on 16.1.1986. As on 31.3.2004, the total membership of the society stood at 66. The paid up share capital of the society as on 31.3.2004 was Rs. 222500. The society’s area of operation is limited to the Thrissilery village in Wayanad District. The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of seven members.

The society functions under the administrative control of the Department of Industries, Kerala. The society is engaged in the manufacturing of handloom cloth. The office and factory of the society are situated at an elevated place and hence the availability of fresh water
has been a serious problem for the society. For the purpose of the present study, the society is included in the category of Industrial societies.

Kottathara Adivasi Brick Workers’ Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (KABWICS)

The KABWICS was registered on 31.12.1985. It commenced its business on 9.1.1986. The area of operation of the society is confined to the Kottathara Panchayat in Wayanad District.

As on 31.3.2004, the society had a total membership of 54. Its paid up share capital as on 31.3.2004 was Rs. 137250. The society is engaged in the manufacturing of soil bricks. The society could not start any of the other objectives included in the bye-laws. The society functions in a rented building and a part-time secretary is working in the society on a consolidated salary. The society is under the administrative control of the Department of Industries, Kerala.

The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of seven members. For the purpose of the present study, the society is included in the category of Industrial Societies.
Vythiri Taluk Adivasi Vanitha Karakausala Industrial Co-operative Society Limited (VTAVKICS)

The VTAVKICS was registered on 21.1.1995 and it commenced its activities on 27.2.1995. As on 31.3.2004, the total number of members of the society stood at 36. The paid up share capital of the society as on 31.3.2004 was Rs. 129000. The area of operation of the society is limited to the Vythiri Taluk in Wayanad District.

The management of the society is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of seven members. The principal activities carried on by the society include manufacturing of readymade garments and handicraft items. Bed making and manufacturing ‘Pappad’ are the other activities carried on by the society.

The society has no full-time paid secretary. One of the directors acts as the secretary. The society functions in a rented building. The society is managed by the Board of Directors consisting of seven lady members. The administrative control of the society is vested with the Department of Industries, Kerala. For the purpose of the present study, the society is included in the category of Industrial societies.
Role of Kerala State Federation of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Development Co-operatives Limited

The Kerala State Federation of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Development Co-operatives Limited (SC/ST Federation) is the apex body of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Co-operative Societies in the State of Kerala. It was registered under the Kerala Co-operative Societies Act, 1969 on 22nd July, 1981. The SC/ST Federation started functioning on 5th October, 1981.

The objective of SC/ST Federation is the overall development of the socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes through its member societies with multifarious programmes and schemes for providing employment to the members.

The authorised share capital of the Federation is 500 lakhs. As on 31-3-2003 the subscribed share capital amounted to Rs. 363.42 lakhs, out of which Rs. 349.66 lakhs is the contribution of Central/State Govt. and National Co-operative Development Corporation (N C D C).

Membership of the Federation as on 31-3-2003 stood at 578 consisting of the State Government, 482 Scheduled Caste societies and 95 Scheduled Tribe societies.
The management of the Federation is vested with the Board of Directors consisting of 24 members. Of the 24 members, 3 members are ex-officio and 2 members are nominated by the government. Total strength of the employees of the Federation is 26 out of which 2 are on deputation from Forest Department and one from Co-operative Department. The Federation has 4 branches at Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur, Wayanad and Kothamangalam. The Federation has an Ayurvedic Medicine Manufacturing Unit at Ancherry, in Thrissur District and a Petrol Bunk of Indian Oil Corporation on dealership basis at Peroorkada in Thiruvananthapuram District.

The main activity of the Federation is the marketing of MFP collected by the members of 30 Primary Tribal Co-operatives affiliated to the Federation. The Federation gives 95 per cent of the sale price to the member societies. They are passing 80 per cent of the same to the tribals towards collection charges. The Federation provides advance to the societies for collection of MFP.

Cane collection and distribution is another activity of the Federation.
The Federation also runs a ‘Cheevakai’ Powdering Unit and a Honey processing Unit.

The Federation provides financial assistance of Rs. 3.20 lakhs to each ST Co-operative society for the construction of MFP godown and purchase of furniture. All the MFP societies in Wayanad District have received this assistance.

The Federation has also implemented a Grain Bank Scheme through selected Tribal Co-operative Societies. This envisages procurement of rice and greengram from Civil Supplies Corporation and supply of the same as part payment for the MFP collected by members of the ST societies.


All the SC/ST Co-operative societies in Kerala have not been affiliated to the SC/ST Federation. Low level of member participation and huge amount of loss are the problems encountered by the SC/ST Federation. The main beneficiaries of the SC/ST Federation are the ST societies engaged in MFP collection.