



Independent observer
of the Global Fund

China Global Fund Watch Initiative

Strengthening Global Fund governance and NGO engagement

The China Global Fund Watch initiative (GF Watch), a non-profit organization based in Beijing, serves as an independent watchdog over the implementation of the Global Fund-financed programmes in China. Its broader mission is to promote the development of a healthy civil society in the country – and hence good governance and public participation – by fostering the growth of HIV/AIDS NGOs and by building partnerships.

GF Watch was founded by human rights lawyer Jia Ping, who served as the first elected member of the China Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) for the community-based organisations and NGOs (CBO/NGO) sector in 2006. During his tenure, he worked on drafting the 2007 CCM CBO/NGO election plan and on designing what is now the CCM NGO Working Committee. Through this process, Mr. Jia realized the need for enhanced governance in the Global Fund's in-country structures in order to strengthen programmes and further develop China's NGOs. As a result, Mr. Jia established GF Watch in November 2007, and has served as its chief executive officer (CEO) ever since.

Given its broader mission of strengthening governance, GF Watch works primarily in four areas, as follows:

- Public participation, good governance and transparency. GF Watch supports public participation – especially of those infected with, or affected by, HIV/AIDS – in seeking to achieve good governance and transparency in Global Fund-financed programmes. In addition to strengthening the role of civil society, GF Watch conducts independent monitoring and reporting of HIV/AIDS related activities and policies through its E-Newsletters. Key functions of the E-Newsletter are to raise awareness, increase transparency and ensure accountability of the Global Fund's programmes, by providing

information, analysis and recommendations on current policies and activities.

- NGO development and partnership building. GF Watch believes that meaningful participation in the governance process requires mature NGOs and productive partnerships. GF Watch offers training workshops and ongoing technical assistance that fosters the development of HIV/AIDS NGOs, and facilitates collaboration between NGOs, government, academia and the private sector. Over the past two years, GF Watch has conducted trainings for NGOs in Heilongjiang and Shanxi provinces, resulting in provincial-level coalitions and increased advocacy among NGOs for greater participation in government policy making processes. In 2011, GF Watch will facilitate provincial-level dialogues between local government and NGO activists on public health policy in these two provinces – and will, in the process, establish an important platform for enhancing cooperation and communication.
- Advocacy for women’s participation in the governance of the national HIV/AIDS response. GF Watch identified the absence of women in key aspects of the decision-making process as a serious impediment to the successful development of effective programmes. To address this gap, GF Watch has expanded its focus to include empowering women activists to participate in various aspects of the governance process. To this end, GF Watch provides regular trainings in capacity building and on-the-job coaching to women leaders to enable them to advocate their perspective more effectively. Moreover, Ms. Zhang Tao, GF Watch’s Associate Director, serves as an advisor to a national women’s network and a provincial-level women’s coalition in Henan province.
- Public health policy and legal research. GF Watch conducts public health and HIV/AIDS-related policy and legal research. This research, most of which has been published, addresses human rights and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues, stigma and discrimination, and access to treatment. GF Watch also publishes a governance research series on topics such as the CCM membership election process, the NGO working committee mechanism, and women’s participation in the Global Fund in-country governance process.

Partnership building, especially among the NGO, government, policy and legal research communities, is an important aspect of the work of GF Watch. These partnerships complement and reinforce a system of checks and balances that promotes accountability and advocates for NGO participation. Consistent with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao’s statement, “Creating a social environment encourages people to monitor the government,” GF Watch has established itself as a leading civil think tank to promote civil society’s meaningful participation in public debates.

Finally, GF Watch has established an advisory board, which consists of leading national and international academics, and which adds depth to the organisation’s management structure and resource pool.

This article is based on information provided by Jia Ping, one of the leading HIV/AIDS lawyers in China, and CEO of GF Watch. For more information, visit the GF Watch [website](#) .

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