

## Weiping Wu, China CDC's Chief Expert in Parasitic Disease Control

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Weiping Wu is a leading expert in parasitic diseases and leads more than ten key projects that focus on important parasitic diseases including schistosomiasis, filariasis, leishmaniasis, and echinococcosis. Over his career, he's achieved several milestone results including the spatial aggregation of the distribution of leishmaniasis cases and related livestock after 15 years of study in the desert area of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, almost 40 publications in SCI journals as the first or corresponding author, and significant contributions to several key documents including the "Action plan for the control of echinococcosis in China" in 1995, "Diagnosis for echinococcosis," and "Echinococcosis control," all of which have helped

standardize prevention and control practices for effective echinococcosis management.

Weiping Wu was born in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in 1962. In 1981, he was admitted to Hunan Medical College (previously: Hunan Yale Medical College) as a public health major. Wanting to pursue a career as a doctor to treat infectious diseases, the policy at that time matched his specialization and assigned him to the Department of Epidemiology, National Institute of Parasitic Diseases (NIPD), Chinese Academy for Preventive Medicine (currently: China CDC) in 1986.

During his early career, Weiping Wu joined a National Key Project to explore the epidemic predictability and influencing factors of schistosomiasis in mountainous areas in Yunnan. He enjoyed working in the field for months with activities ranging from weighing cattle dung, counting *Schistosoma* eggs, and collecting snails to observing the survival of *Oncomelania* intermediate snail hosts.

In 1988, Weiping Wu studied for his master's degree under the guidance of Prof. Zongjun Shi, the First Prize Winner of the National Science and Technology Progress Award for his key findings related to lymphatic filariasis transmission. Like his supervisor, Weiping Wu guided his students with professionalism and diligence and said to them: "From the words and deeds of the older generation of scientists like Prof. Shi, I have learned meticulousness, responsibility, hard work, and dedication to parasitic disease control and prevention programs, interventional activities, and research."

Weiping Wu has been active in formulating national standards for lymphatic filariasis elimination, in promoting the process of certifying lymphatic filariasis elimination in China and disseminating of Chinese experience for the disease elimination. He was one of the key drafters for the Standard for Lymphatic Filariasis Elimination that won the Standard Innovation Award, and China became the first country in the world to be acknowledged by the World Health Organization (WHO). His commitment and leadership earned him an award as the Advanced Individual to Eliminate Filariasis by the Ministry of Health of China (currently known as the National Health Commission of China, NHC).

Beyond his professional work in China, Weiping Wu has also continuously participated in international exchanges. In 1996, he received recommendation to study at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand for a master's of science, and he received advanced training and cooperatively researched more than 5 times in scientific exchanges and workshops at institutions such as the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the University of California, Berkeley. These advanced degree and capacity building achievements have broadened his knowledge and competency in specific technologies to be able to lead expert teams in epidemiological investigations, prevention and control of infectious and neglected tropical diseases, and intensive research activities. Weiping Wu's professionalism led to his appointment as the Chief of the Department of Filariasis, Leishmaniasis, and Echinococcosis and the Chief of the Department of Echinococcosis at the NIPD.

Moreover, his expertise and research on echinococcosis has led to the elucidation of echinococcosis epidemiology

and risk factors in China that guided and supported NHC programs nationwide. Challenges including harsh working environments, altitude stress, and traffic accidents could not stop his ambition for echinococcosis control and elimination in China. Dr. Li Wei, the Director of the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture CDC and highly regarded tropical disease expert, expressed his gratitude that “Weiping Wu is a responsible and compassionate expert, approachable and pragmatic scientist, and a leader.”

Weiping Wu expresses gratitude for working in this field, and he believes himself to be lucky to have learned from, worked with, and collaborated with several renowned scientists in China and around the world to lessen the infectious disease public health burden in China, to improve global quality care delivery programs, and to develop programs for poverty alleviation and protection of vulnerable populations. As the Chief Expert in Parasitic Diseases for China CDC, Weiping Wu will continue to strive for these goals and for a healthy China.

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