

Report: ODIN Consortium's Annual General Meeting 2026 (Oxford)

The ODIN consortium came together in Oxford on 28 and 29 May 2026 for its Annual General Meeting, bringing together partners from across Africa and Europe to review progress, share experiences and agree priorities for the final phase of the ODIN and ODIN-Mpox projects.

The meeting highlighted the significant progress made in developing environmental genomic surveillance approaches for pathogens of public health importance. Across Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania, environmental surveillance activities are now established, with partners collecting and analysing wastewater and other environmental samples to understand how these approaches can complement existing public health surveillance.

Partners shared important examples of how the work is already contributing to public health practice. In Burkina Faso, the detection of antimicrobial resistant bacteria in well water led to engagement with local health authorities and action to improve water infrastructure. In Tanzania, mobile laboratory units developed through the project have been used during outbreak responses, including for mpox and Marburg, demonstrating how mobile genomic capacity can support surveillance where laboratory infrastructure may be limited.

The consortium also reviewed progress in developing the tools needed to turn environmental samples into useful public health information. Three bioinformatics pipelines have been developed for metagenomic analysis, whole genome sequencing and mpox variant analysis. A new web-based dashboard is also being finalised to help partners manage sample information, run analyses and visualise results through a more integrated workflow.

Training and knowledge exchange remain central to ODIN. Partners have participated in practical training, staff exchanges and joint activities covering environmental sampling, mobile laboratories, sequencing and bioinformatics. Importantly, this work has been closely linked with national public health institutions, helping to strengthen capacity beyond the lifetime of the projects. ODIN partners are also contributing their experience to wider discussions on wastewater surveillance, including the development of the Africa CDC continental strategy.

The AGM also marked an important milestone for project dissemination. The first ODIN consortium paper was published on 28 May in *The Lancet Microbe*, coinciding with the opening day of the meeting. Further publications are now being prepared to share results from the participating countries, alongside lessons from mobile laboratories, environmental surveillance and the implementation of genomic approaches in different settings.

As ODIN and ODIN-Mpox move towards their final stages, the consortium will focus on completing remaining analyses, publishing results, transferring tools and knowledge to national partners and ensuring that project resources remain useful and accessible. The meeting reinforced a shared commitment to building sustainable, locally led environmental surveillance capacity and to continuing collaboration beyond the current projects.

Meeting Location: Green Templeton College, University of Oxford, 43 Woodstock Rd, Oxford OX2 6HG

Attendance

On site

- Rolf Lood
- Maria Joao
- Bart Mesuere
- Sakina Bombaywala
- Tim van den Bossche
- Paul Kingpriest
- Trudie Lang
- Adam Dale
- Marc Tahita
- Berenger Kabore
- Fadima Bocoum
- Adriana Krolicka
- Jeremy Cook
- Ananda Tiwari
- Outi Nyholm
- Hypolite Muhindo
- Vito Baraka
- Eric Lyimo

On-line

- Vivi Maketa
- Tarja Pitkänen
- Päivi Meriläinen
- Elena Sgarabotto
- Dylan Shea
- Tam Tran
- Palpouguini Lompo
- Elisa Salmivirta
- Evodie Ngelesi



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