The Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) in collaboration with its health sector partners validated 2013 Sector Annual Operational Plan (AOP) in a two day workshop held on 8-9 January 2013. The AOP was developed by consolidating 19 Local Council Health Plans, 21 Hospital Plans and the Central Level Plan which were individually validated and finalized in November 2012 with the input of the health sector partners. The initial validation processes helped the sector to align and endorse plans at all levels based on the available resource envelope.

The AOP is a comprehensive one-health-plan for the sector that will guide the operations of all the partners at all levels. It is inclusive of the key activities that are targeted for implementation during the year and provides the basis for monitoring progress towards achieving the jointly agreed targets. It was validated in Freetown with the participation and inputs of MoHS Programme Directors and Managers, District Medical Officers, representatives of the District Councils and Tertiary Government Hospitals, health development and implementing partners and civil society representatives. The sessions were held in plenary, group discussions and presentations.

Dr Alhassah Seisay, Deputy Chief Medical Officer in MoHS commended the planning process and the support it received from partners. He urged all stakeholders to lend their full support for effective implementation of the set targets.

Statements of commitment to support implementation of the AOP were made by representatives of the UN family, the NGOs and the civil society. Dr Teniin Gakuruh, WHO health system specialist delivering statement on behalf of the UN noted that implementation of the plan requires concerted efforts of all stakeholders. She noted that effective collaboration would help to avoid duplications of efforts and reduce costs.

The validated 2013 AOP will be discussed at the sector coordination committees and finally endorsed in the annual health plan summit. The consolidated and jointly endorsed sector AOP will be the single reference document for all stakeholders for the implementation and monitoring of priorities of 2013. The Planning process was coordinated by the Directorate of Planning and Information in MoHS.