

Value creation and long-term sustainability

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Through our principal activities – making payments, holding savings, providing finance and managing risks – we play a central role in society and in the economic system. Our target is to build and maintain a business which is sustainable in the long term.

In May 2013, we reinforced our vision for the long-term direction of HSBC first outlined in 2011, together with a clear strategy that will help us achieve it. It guides where and how we seek to compete. We constantly assess our progress against this strategy and provide regular updates to stakeholders.

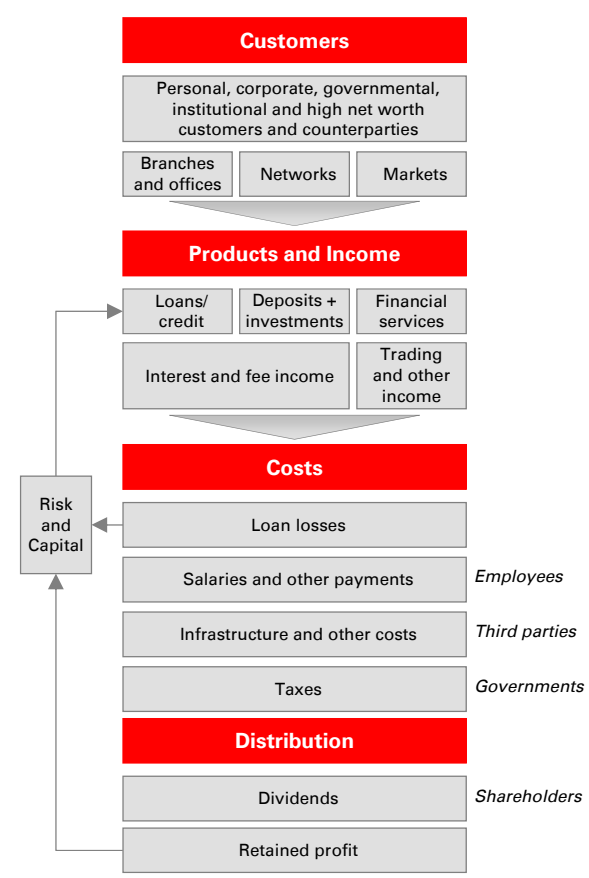
How we create value

Banks, and the individuals within them, play a crucial role in the economic and social system, creating value for many parties in different ways. We provide a facility for customers to securely and conveniently deposit their savings. We allow funds to flow from savers and investors to borrowers, either directly or through the capital markets. The borrowers then use these loans or other forms of credit to buy goods or invest in businesses. By these means, we help the economy to convert savings which may be individually short-term into financing which is, in aggregate, longer term. We bring together investors and people looking for investment funding and we develop new financial products. We also facilitate personal and commercial transactions by acting as payment agent both within countries and internationally. Through these activities, we take on risks which we then manage and reflect in our prices.

Our direct lending includes residential and commercial mortgages and overdrafts, and term loan facilities. We finance importers and exporters engaged in international trade and provide advances to companies secured on amounts owed to them by their customers.

We also offer additional financial products and services including broking, asset management, financial advisory, life insurance, corporate finance, securities services and alternative investments. We make markets in financial assets so that investors have confidence in efficient pricing and the availability of buyers and sellers. We provide these products for clients ranging from governments to large and mid-market corporates, small and medium-sized enterprises, high net worth individuals and retail customers. We help customers raise financing from external investors in debt and equity capital markets. We create liquidity and price transparency in these securities allowing investors to buy and sell them on the secondary market. We exchange national currencies, helping international trade.

Value creation



Our main products and services are described in more detail on page 79.

Our operating income is primarily derived from:

- *net interest income* – interest income we earn on customer loans and advances and on our surplus funds, less interest expense we pay on interest-bearing customer accounts and debt securities in issue;
- *net fee income* – fee income we earn from the provision of financial services and products to customers less fees we pay; and
- *net trading income* – income from client driven trading activities primarily conducted in Markets, including Foreign Exchange, Credit, Rates and Equities trading.

Strategic Report (continued)

Value creation and long-term sustainability / Our strategy

We offer products that help a wide range of customers to manage their risks and exposures through, for example, life insurance and pension products for retail customers and receivables finance or documentary trade instruments for companies. Corporate customers also ask us to help with managing the financial risks arising in their businesses by employing our expertise and market access.

An important way of managing risks arising from changes in asset and liability values and movements in rates is provided by derivative products such as forwards, futures, swaps and options. In this connection, we are an active market-maker and derivative counterparty. Customers use derivatives to manage their risks, for example, by:

- using forward foreign currency contracts to hedge their income from export sales or costs of imported materials;
- using an inflation swap to hedge future inflation-linked liabilities, for example, for pension payments;
- transforming variable payments of debt interest into fixed rate payments, or vice versa; or
- providing investors with hedges against movements in markets or particular stocks.

We charge customers a margin, representing the difference between the price charged to the customer and the theoretical cost of executing an offsetting hedge in the market. We retain that margin, which represents a profit to the Group, at maturity of the transaction if the risk management of the position has been effective.

We then use derivatives along with other financial instruments to constrain the risks arising from customer business within risk limits. Normally, we will have customers both buying and selling relevant instruments so our focus is then on managing any residual risks through transactions with other dealers or professional counterparties. Where we do not fully hedge the residual risks we may gain or lose money as market movements affect the net value of the portfolio.

Stress tests and other risk management techniques are also used to ensure that potential losses remain within our risk appetite under a wide range of potential market scenarios.

In addition, we manage risks within HSBC, including those which arise from the business we do with customers.

For further information on our risk measures, see page 38, and on how we manage our own risks, see page 39.

Long-term sustainability

At HSBC, we understand that the success of our business is closely connected to the economic, environmental and social landscape in which we operate. For us, long-term corporate sustainability means achieving a sustainable return on equity and profit growth so that we can continue to reward shareholders and employees, build long-lasting relationships with customers and suppliers, pay taxes and duties in the countries in which we operate, and invest in communities for future growth. The way we do business is as important as what we do: our responsibilities to our customers, employees and shareholders as well as to the countries and communities in which we operate go far beyond simply being profitable.

Continuing financial success depends, in part, on our ability to identify and address environmental, social and ethical developments which present risks or opportunities for the business. It also depends on the consistent implementation of the highest standards everywhere we operate to detect, deter and protect against financial crime. Our response to these factors shapes our reputation, drives employee engagement and affects the riskiness of the business, and can help reduce costs and secure new revenue streams.

Our international spread and the long-established position of many of our businesses in HSBC's home and priority growth markets, when combined with our wide-ranging portfolio of products and services, differentiate HSBC from our competitors and give our business and operating models an inherent resilience. This has enabled the Group to remain profitable and grow through the most turbulent of times for our industry, and we are confident that the models will continue to stand us in good stead in the future and will underpin the achievement of our strategic priorities.

Our business and operating models are described in more detail on page 13. For further information on our response to environmental and community issues, see page 34.