

# RSK GROUP SUSTAINABILITY ROUTE MAP

IPLOCA Corporate Social Responsibility Award 2019



## Business profile

The RSK group is the UK's leading specialist environmental, health, safety, engineering and sustainability company. Founded in 1989 to service the pipeline industry, RSK still works on major pipelines in the UK and overseas. Our services are grouped into four operational divisions:

- our environment and planning division provides consultancy and services related to socio-economics, environmental impact assessment, ecology, acoustics, air quality, hydrology, radiation safety, landscape management, archaeology and stakeholder communications
- our geosciences and engineering division offers land assessment and geotechnical consultancy, civil and structural engineering, and building sciences services
- our contracting division supplies site investigation, drilling, remediation, spill response, asbestos removal, hazardous waste management and laboratory services
- our agriculture, land and property management division works across the food and drinks supply chain to provide specialist consultancy services to landowners on soil and crop management, developers, farmers and policymakers.

RSK is one of the few environmental consultancies worldwide to have achieved certification to the ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 standards for quality, environmental, and health and safety management.

Our headquarters is in the UK, but, driven by the requirements of our key customers, we have built up a network of international offices across Continental Europe, the Middle East and Africa. We now employ more than 3,000 staff in 23 countries around the world.

## Findings

Sustainability is at the core of what RSK does. Since 1989, the concept of sustainability has influenced every decision and action we have taken, and our corporate responsibility and sustainability (CR&S) programme is a key component of this belief.

Our approach to CR&S continues to be employee driven and is shaped by the impacts of the diverse projects we undertake and the specificities of the geographical areas that we work in. However, our diversity came at the expense of a holistic CR&S strategy. This has been a growing challenge over the last 10 years, as the company has more than doubled in size and made more than 20 acquisitions.

## Solutions

We needed to develop a unified strategy that satisfied the expectations of our business partners, employees and local communities while also respecting the differences and specific circumstances of our different clients. During series of workshops with senior management, we developed a visualisation (the *RSK group sustainability route map*, Figure 1) of the group's commitments, targets and objectives to 2025 highlighting their links to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and RSK's guiding principles and business strategy.

The route map is structured under five sustainability pillars:

- a. **Safety, health and quality** – providing safe and healthy working conditions, preventing physical and mental harm to workers, and ensuring that our services satisfy the highest professional standards with year-on-year improved performance

- b. Our people and ethics** – developing a satisfied and motivated employee base, providing opportunities for career progression, enhancing workforce diversity, and treating each person fairly and equitably according to individual merit
- c. Environment and communities** – finding innovative ways to use fewer natural resources, produce less waste and contribute to the transition to a low-carbon economy while also managing the environmental risks associated with our activities and minimising potential disruptions to local ecosystems and surrounding communities
- d. Clients and suppliers** – exercising due diligence and ensuring that we are part of a sustainable value chain, developing long-term mutually beneficial relationships with our business partners and contributing to economic growth in the areas where we work
- e. Financial and governance** – investing in strong financial performance and sustainable growth that is grounded in our commitments to integrity, governance, and responsible business practices.

Each pillar is divided into four relevant topics that outline past achievements and future targets and objectives and an underlying long-term goal.

The route map is a continuation of the group's existing centrally planned initiatives (health, safety, environment and quality, human resources, CR&S, carbon reporting, etc.) and provides a comprehensive framework for capturing the enthusiasm and initiatives of our employees. It illustrates how they can contribute to the company's long-term objectives and adhere to the requirements of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

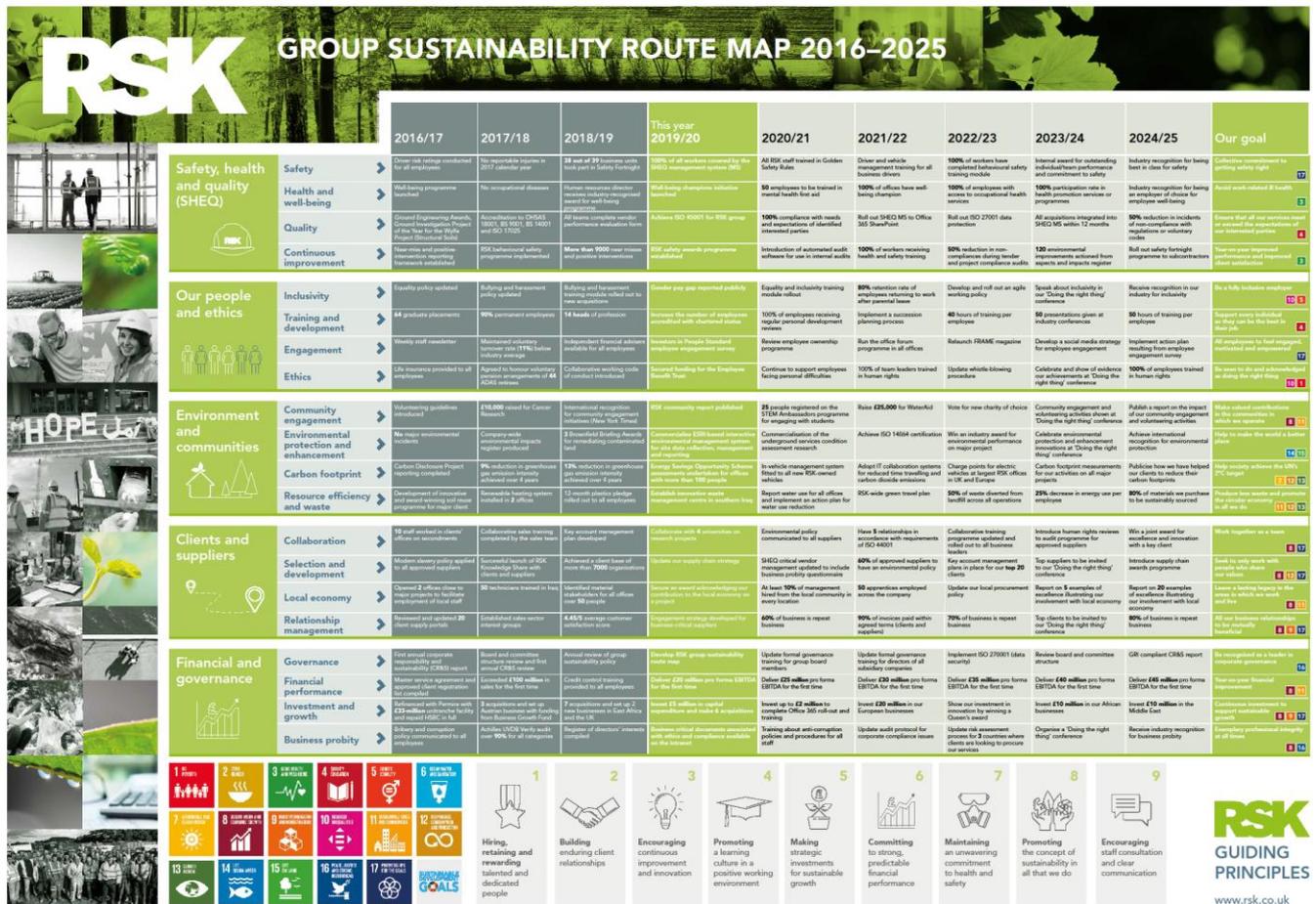


Figure 1. RSK's sustainability route map from 2016 to 2025.

## Implementation

The route map provides a structure that will guide the efforts of all our employees to make RSK a better, more sustainable business. The initiative will be driven by working groups covering each sustainability pillar. Each employee can contribute by making annual personal commitments to take actions that will contribute to the route map's goals. The project is funded by RSK and led by the group's board, CR&S representatives in each office and a staff member to coordinate the activities.

Project managers on all site-based contracts are encouraged to display and discuss the contents of the route map as part of their toolbox talks. Project managers implement the goals of the route map on-site, lead campaigns targeting reduced waste, energy and water consumption and plastics use, and run community initiatives such as litter picking, supporting local charities and visiting schools to raise awareness. Where clients have similar outreach schemes, we provide staff and resources as appropriate. Two examples are provided below.



*Figure 2. Tanzanian staff discussing the RSK's sustainability route map.*

RSK's remediation scheme across Tanzania will employ more than 200 Tanzanian staff (Figure 2) over the next year. The project will help with the removal of hydrocarbon contamination from wellpoints and the remediation of in situ pipework.

We have successfully implemented the safety, health and quality pillar of the route map and no accidents have been recorded on the project to date. Local community engagement and supply chain collaboration plans will be launched over the next year.



*Figure 3. RSK staff supporting local communities in Basra.*

Our team in Iraq has been undertaking environmental, social and health impact assessment work for the Basrah Gas Company in preparation for proposed pipeline routes. Motivated to implement RSK's commitments to make valued contributions to local communities, the team launched a charity appeal that, through a concerted effort among the group and the Abu Dhabi and Iraq staff, raised more than \$2500. The money went to the families who live in primitive settlements in the project catchment areas. It was very much a hands-on approach: two of our Iraqi staff visited sheep and goat herder families, local council leaders and community schools to find out the children's requirements. A huge shopping spree of clothes and food parcels was distributed on the last day of Ramadan and in time for the festival of Eid al-Fitr (Figure 3).

## Long-term planning

RSK's performance against its stated objectives will be reviewed annually to align with its budget cycle and business strategy. Our objectives will be updated using practical lessons learned and stakeholder feedback to ensure that they remain relevant.