

LEADING COMPLEX CHANGE AT GLOBE TELECOM

Introduction

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Globe Telecom's evolution from a traditional telecommunications provider to a digital solutions company represents a transformative case study in the Philippine business landscape. This transformation, marked by a ₱54 billion investment in digital infrastructure and GCash's achievement of ₱4.9 trillion in transaction volume (Globe Telecom, 2023) demonstrates successful adaptation to digital disruption while maintaining regulatory compliance in a complex industry environment (Rogers, 2023).

This analysis is designed to inform key public and private sector stakeholders. Primary government stakeholders, including the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and Department of Finance (DOF), will find particular value in the policy frameworks and regulatory implications presented. Regulatory bodies such as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), and National Privacy Commission (NPC) can derive insights for regulatory framework adaptation. Industry leaders, particularly members of the Makati Business Club and Management Association of the Philippines, will benefit from the strategic transformation insights and implementation frameworks detailed in this analysis.

The significance of Globe's transformation extends beyond telecommunications, as highlighted by Sebastian et al. (2020), demonstrating the successful integration of digital capabilities while maintaining operational excellence. Venkatraman's (2022) research emphasizes the importance of regulatory framework adaptation and stakeholder interest orchestration, while Bharadwaj et al. (2021) note the context of rapid digital adoption trends and evolving market structures.

Critical success factors identified through this transformation align with several theoretical frameworks. Kane et al. (2019) highlight the importance of infrastructure investment and digital capability development. Beer and Nohria's (2000) research emphasizes the significance of change management and cultural adaptation, while Warner and Wäger (2019) identify key elements in regulatory compliance and risk management.

The transformation provides valuable lessons for policy formation across multiple domains. In digital infrastructure, it offers insights into development strategies and financing mechanisms. The regulatory framework aspects demonstrate successful approaches to technology governance and innovation support. Public-private partnerships, workforce development, financial technology integration, and data governance emerge as critical areas requiring structured policy approaches.

These insights can inform policy decisions that balance innovation with stability, align consumer protection with business growth, and support technological advancement while addressing societal needs. The examination of Globe's digital transformation journey provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how traditional companies can successfully navigate digital transformation while maintaining regulatory compliance and operational excellence.

Strategic implications extend to several key areas of policy development. The transformation demonstrates the importance of structured approaches to digital infrastructure development, regulatory framework

evolution, and workforce capability building. It also highlights the critical role of public-private partnerships in driving digital transformation and the necessity of robust data governance frameworks in the digital economy.

Understanding this transformation is crucial for policymakers and business leaders as they shape regulations and strategies to support similar digital initiatives across various sectors. The experiences and insights gained from Globe's journey provide valuable guidance for organizations navigating their own digital transformation paths while maintaining regulatory compliance and operational stability in an increasingly digital business environment.

II. Statement of Issues

The digital transformation journey of Globe Telecom presents a complex web of interconnected challenges that demand careful consideration from stakeholders and policymakers. At the core of these issues lies the fundamental challenge of technological integration and infrastructure development. As Davenport and Westerman (2018) emphasize, organizations undertaking digital transformation must navigate the delicate balance between maintaining existing operations while implementing new digital capabilities. Globe's substantial investment of ₱54 billion in infrastructure highlights the significant financial commitment required, raising critical questions about sustainable funding models and return on investment measurements that Sebastian et al. (2020) identify as crucial success factors in digital transformation initiatives.

The organizational dimension presents equally significant challenges, particularly in change management and cultural transformation. Beer and Nohria's (2000) research indicating a 70% failure rate in change initiatives underscores the magnitude of this challenge. Globe's transition from a traditional telecommunications provider to a digital solutions company requires fundamental shifts in organizational values and behaviors, which Schein (2010) identifies as essential elements of successful transformation. This cultural evolution becomes particularly complex when considering the integration of traditional telecommunications operations with innovative fintech ventures like GCash, requiring careful balance between maintaining operational excellence and fostering innovation.

Regulatory compliance and risk management emerge as critical considerations in Globe's transformation journey. Venkatraman (2022) highlights the increasing complexity of regulatory frameworks in digital businesses, particularly when organizations operate across multiple sectors. Globe must navigate a sophisticated regulatory landscape that encompasses both telecommunications and financial services regulations, including data privacy requirements, cybersecurity standards, anti-money laundering protocols, and consumer protection measures. The BSP Digital Payments Report (2023) further emphasizes the need for robust compliance frameworks in digital financial services, adding another layer of complexity to Globe's operational requirements.

Market competition and innovation present ongoing challenges that require strategic attention. Rogers (2023) emphasizes how traditional companies must maintain their competitive edge while simultaneously pursuing innovation initiatives. Globe faces intense competition

not only from traditional telecommunications providers but also from pure-play digital service providers, necessitating continuous innovation while protecting its core business. Bharadwaj et al. (2021) note that meeting evolving customer expectations in this dynamic environment requires agile response capabilities and innovative service delivery models.

The talent management dimension presents unique challenges in the context of digital transformation. Singh and Hess (2017) identify the acquisition and development of digital talent as critical success factors in transformation initiatives. Globe faces the complex task of attracting and retaining digital talent in a highly competitive market while simultaneously developing the capabilities of its existing workforce. This challenge extends to building digital leadership capabilities and fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation, which Warner and Wäger (2019) identify as essential for sustainable digital transformation.

Infrastructure and investment sustainability represent ongoing concerns that require careful balance. Christensen (2016) emphasizes the importance of maintaining equilibrium between short-term performance metrics and long-term transformation goals. Globe must optimize its capital allocation between traditional infrastructure maintenance and digital innovation initiatives while managing shareholder expectations and maintaining competitive cost structures. This balance becomes particularly crucial in the context of rapid technological change and evolving market demands.

These interconnected issues require collaborative solutions involving both private sector initiatives and government support. The resolution of these challenges will significantly impact not only Globe's transformation success but also the broader digital evolution of the Philippine economy. As Warner and Wäger (2019) suggest, successful digital transformation requires a supportive ecosystem involving multiple stakeholders, including regulatory bodies, industry partners, and educational institutions.

III. Outline of Arguments

The transformation journey of Globe Telecom presents several compelling arguments that demonstrate successful approaches to digital transformation in regulated industries. These arguments, supported by empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks, provide valuable insights for both policy makers and industry leaders.

Strategic investment in digital infrastructure is a fundamental driver of innovation and transformation success. Globe's ₱54 billion infrastructure investment, resulting in 97.44% 5G coverage in the National Capital Region, validates Kane et al.'s (2019) assertion that organizations with mature digital strategies require substantial technological investment. Sebastian et al. (2020) further reinforce this argument by highlighting the dual necessity of operational backbone and digital services platform. Globe's comprehensive investment approach, encompassing core network modernization, digital platform development, analytics integration, and cybersecurity enhancement, demonstrates the practical application of this theoretical framework.

The cultural dimension of digital transformation proves equally crucial, as evidenced by Globe's experience. Schein's (2010) emphasis on organizational culture as a fundamental enabler of digital success is clearly reflected in Globe's transformation approach. Warner and Wäger (2019) identify three essential elements of digital cultural transformation - digital mindset development, cross-functional collaboration, and agile methodology implementation - all evident in Globe's strategy. The success of GCash, processing ₱4.9 trillion in transactions is a tangible demonstration of how cultural transformation enables digital innovation, supporting Bharadwaj et al.'s (2021) findings on the relationship between organizational culture and transformation outcomes.

Regulatory alignment emerges as a critical enabler of innovation in regulated industries. Venkatraman (2022) emphasizes the importance of proactive regulatory engagement in successful digital transformation. Globe's approach to regulatory compliance, particularly in fintech integration, demonstrates this through early regulatory engagement, robust compliance framework development, and active participation in regulatory dialogues. This proactive stance has enabled the company to innovate while maintaining regulatory compliance,

providing a model for other organizations in regulated industries.

The human capital dimension of digital transformation is evidenced through Globe's comprehensive talent development initiatives. Singh and Hess (2017) highlight the critical role of both technical and leadership capabilities in digital transformation success. Globe's investment in digital skills training, leadership development, and innovation-focused roles demonstrates the practical application of this principle. The company's establishment of digital centers of excellence and commitment to continuous learning programs further reinforces the argument that talent development underpins digital capability building.

Customer-centricity emerges as a crucial driver of digital innovation in Globe's transformation journey. Christensen's (2016) theory of disruptive innovation is validated through Globe's approach to digital service development, which emphasizes customer feedback integration, personalized service delivery, and data-driven decision making. The company's success in enhancing digital customer experience and implementing omnichannel service delivery demonstrates the effectiveness of this customer-centric approach.

The role of public-private partnership in facilitating digital transformation is clearly demonstrated in Globe's experience. Beer and Nohria (2000) emphasize the importance of supportive external ecosystems in successful transformation. Globe's active collaboration with government agencies, participation in national digital initiatives, and engagement in policy development showcase the practical benefits of public-private partnership in digital transformation. This collaborative approach has not only supported Globe's transformation but also contributed to broader digital ecosystem development in the Philippines.

These arguments, supported by Globe's measurable performance metrics and market position, provide valuable insights for organizations undertaking digital transformation, particularly in regulated industries. The company's successful navigation of digital transformation challenges offers practical lessons for policy makers and business leaders alike, demonstrating the importance of balanced approach to technological innovation, cultural change, regulatory compliance, and stakeholder engagement.

IV Discussion:

Globe Telecom's Digital Transformation Journey

The comprehensive analysis of Globe Telecom's digital transformation journey reveals intricate relationships between organizational change, technological innovation, and strategic management in the contemporary business environment. This extensive examination provides valuable insights into successful digital transformation in regulated industries while highlighting critical success factors and potential challenges.

Leadership and Organizational Change Management

The transformation success at Globe Telecom fundamentally challenges Beer and Nohria's (2000) sobering statistics showing a 70% failure rate in organizational change initiatives. Globe's ability to navigate this traditionally difficult terrain demonstrates the effectiveness of their integrated approach to change management. The company's success in maintaining operational excellence while pursuing digital innovation aligns with Davenport and Westerman's (2018) research on balancing legacy operations with digital transformation. This balance is particularly evident in Globe's approach to infrastructure modernization, where the company successfully maintained service continuity while implementing significant technological upgrades.

The organizational culture transformation, which Schein (2010) identifies as crucial for successful digital transformation, manifests in Globe's systematic approach to change management. The company's success in shifting from a traditional telecommunications mindset to a digital-first approach demonstrates effective cultural transformation strategies. This cultural evolution becomes particularly significant when considering the integration of traditional telecommunications services with innovative digital offerings like GCash, requiring careful balance between maintaining operational stability and fostering innovation.

Strategic Investment and Infrastructure Development

Globe's substantial ₱54 billion infrastructure investment represents a practical application of Sebastian et al.'s (2020) framework for sustainable funding models in digital transformation. This investment strategy demonstrates careful consideration of both immediate operational needs and long-term strategic objectives.

The company's approach to infrastructure development aligns with current market demands while anticipating future technological requirements, showing foresight in strategic planning and execution.

The integration of digital capabilities across the organization supports Warner and Wäger's (2019) findings on the importance of comprehensive digital transformation strategies. Globe's investment in both physical infrastructure and digital capabilities demonstrates understanding of the interconnected nature of modern telecommunications services. This dual focus on traditional infrastructure and digital innovation provides a model for other organizations undertaking similar transformational journeys.

Regulatory Compliance and Risk Management

The complexity of regulatory compliance in Globe's transformation aligns with Venkatraman's (2022) research on regulatory challenges in digital businesses. The company's success in navigating multiple regulatory frameworks while maintaining innovation momentum demonstrates effective regulatory management strategies. This is particularly evident in their approach to financial technology integration through GCash, where they successfully managed both telecommunications and financial services regulations.

The implementation of robust risk management frameworks shows alignment with current regulatory requirements while maintaining flexibility for future innovation. This balance becomes increasingly important as Rogers (2023) emphasizes the need for traditional companies to maintain competitive advantage while pursuing innovation initiatives.

Talent Management and Capability Development

Globe's approach to talent management validates Singh and Hess's (2017) identification of digital talent acquisition and development as critical success factors in transformation initiatives. The company's comprehensive talent development strategy addresses both immediate skill requirements and long-term capability building needs. This approach becomes particularly significant when considering Bharadwaj et al.'s (2021) findings on the importance of meeting evolving customer expectations in dynamic environments.

The development of digital capabilities across the organization demonstrates understanding of Warner and Wäger's (2019) emphasis on building sustainable digital

transformation capabilities. Globe's investment in continuous learning and development programs shows commitment to long-term organizational capability building.

Market Competition and Innovation Management

The competitive landscape analysis reveals alignment with Christensen's (2016) emphasis on balancing short-term performance with long-term transformation goals. Globe's success in maintaining market position while pursuing digital innovation demonstrates effective competitive strategy implementation. This balance becomes particularly crucial when considering the company's need to compete with both traditional telecommunications providers and pure-play digital service providers.

Stakeholder Engagement and Value Creation

Globe's stakeholder engagement strategy demonstrates effective application of modern stakeholder management principles. The company's success in maintaining stakeholder support while pursuing transformation initiatives shows understanding of the complex relationships between various stakeholder groups. This becomes particularly significant when considering the need to balance shareholder expectations with long-term transformation goals.

Future Implications and Sustainability

Looking forward, Globe's transformation journey provides valuable insights for organizations undertaking similar initiatives. The company's success in balancing multiple competing priorities while maintaining transformation momentum demonstrates effective strategic management. This experience suggests several key considerations for organizations undertaking digital transformation: (a) The importance of integrated approach to change management; (b) Need for balanced investment in infrastructure and capabilities; (c) Significance of effective stakeholder management; (d) Critical role of talent development and cultural transformation; and (e) Importance of regulatory compliance and risk management.

These insights from Globe's transformation journey provide valuable lessons for organizations navigating similar challenges in the digital age.

The experience demonstrates that successful digital transformation requires careful attention to multiple dimensions while maintaining focus on long-term value creation and sustainable growth.

V. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

A. Support for Digital Transformation Initiatives

Globe Telecom's strategic approach to digital transformation, particularly its substantial infrastructure investment program, provides compelling evidence for the critical role of comprehensive support mechanisms in successful digital transformation. The company's ₱54 billion development program strongly aligns with Kane et al.'s (2019) research emphasizing the fundamental importance of technological investment in digital transformation success.

This investment strategy demonstrates the practical application of Sebastian et al.'s (2020) framework, which highlights the dual necessity of maintaining robust operational infrastructure while developing advanced digital service platforms. The tangible success of this approach is clearly evidenced by Globe's achievement of 97.44% 5G coverage in the National Capital Region, showcasing the concrete benefits of structured and well-supported investment in digital infrastructure.

The impact of these transformation initiatives on market outcomes provides strong validation of Bharadwaj et al.'s (2021) research regarding the critical relationship between organizational transformation and market performance. This relationship is particularly well-demonstrated in the remarkable success of Globe's digital payment platform, GCash, which has achieved significant market penetration and processed an impressive ₱4.9 trillion in transactions, as documented by Rogers (2023). These outcomes strongly suggest that comprehensive policy support for digital transformation initiatives can drive substantial economic benefits and catalyze broader market development.

The success of Globe's digital transformation initiatives underscores the importance of sustained support mechanisms across multiple dimensions. This includes not only direct infrastructure investment but also the development of supporting ecosystems, regulatory frameworks, and market mechanisms that enable digital innovation. The company's experience demonstrates how well-structured support for digital transformation can create a foundation for sustainable digital growth while generating

significant economic value and market development opportunities.

These results highlight the critical role of comprehensive support frameworks in enabling successful digital transformation.

The combination of substantial infrastructure investment, strategic digital service development, and supportive policy frameworks has enabled Globe to achieve significant market outcomes while contributing to broader digital ecosystem development. This experience provides valuable insights for policymakers and industry leaders considering similar digital transformation initiatives, demonstrating the importance of comprehensive support mechanisms in driving successful digital transformation outcomes.

B. Regulatory Framework Enhancement

Globe Telecom's experience in navigating the complex regulatory landscape while driving digital innovation provides valuable insights into effective regulatory framework enhancement. Venkatraman's (2022) research on regulatory engagement in digital transformation finds practical application in Globe's approach to managing regulatory requirements while maintaining innovation momentum. The company's success, particularly in fintech integration through GCash, demonstrates the effectiveness of proactive regulatory engagement and the development of robust compliance frameworks. This approach has enabled Globe to balance innovation objectives with regulatory requirements, creating a model for successful digital transformation within a regulated environment.

The implementation of regulatory compliance strategies aligns closely with Warner and Wäger's (2019) research, which identifies essential elements for successful digital transformation, including the critical role of cross-functional collaboration and agile methodology implementation within regulatory constraints. Globe's ability to integrate these approaches while maintaining strict regulatory compliance provides valuable insights for framework development. The company's success in this area demonstrates how organizations can effectively combine innovative operational approaches with regulatory requirements, creating a balanced framework that supports both compliance and innovation objectives. The enhancement of regulatory frameworks through Globe's experience shows the importance of developing flexible yet robust compliance mechanisms. By establishing clear protocols for regulatory engagement while maintaining the agility needed for digital innovation,

Globe has created a practical regulatory framework enhancement model that supports compliance objectives and business growth. This approach has proven particularly effective in areas requiring significant regulatory oversight, such as financial services integration and data privacy protection.

The success of these regulatory framework enhancements is evident in Globe's ability to launch and scale innovative digital services while maintaining regulatory compliance. This experience provides valuable lessons for organizations and regulators alike, demonstrating how regulatory frameworks can be enhanced to support innovation while ensuring appropriate oversight and consumer protection. The practical application of these frameworks has created a blueprint for balancing regulatory requirements with digital transformation objectives, offering insights that can be applied across various regulated industries undertaking digital transformation initiatives.

C. Skill Development and Capability Building

Globe Telecom's experience in digital transformation underscores the critical importance of comprehensive talent development and capability building strategies. Supporting Singh and Hess's (2017) research emphasizing the dual importance of technical and leadership capabilities in digital transformation, Globe's systematic approach to talent development provides a practical model for workforce development initiatives. The company's strategic investments in digital skills training, leadership development programs, and innovation-focused roles demonstrate how organizations can effectively build the capabilities required for successful digital transformation.

The organizational learning and development framework implemented by Globe aligns with Beer and Nohria's (2000) research highlighting the significance of supportive external ecosystems in successful transformation. Through the establishment of digital centers of excellence and the implementation of continuous learning programs, Globe has created a structured approach to capability building that supports both individual and organizational development. This comprehensive approach ensures that skill development initiatives are aligned with both current operational needs and future strategic objectives. The success of these capability building initiatives is evidenced in Globe's ability to maintain operational excellence while driving digital innovation. The company's investment in developing both technical expertise and leadership capabilities has created a workforce capable of navigating the complexities of digital transformation while

maintaining high performance standards. This balanced approach to skill development has proven essential in supporting the organization's transition from a traditional telecommunications provider to a digital solutions company.

The structured approach to capability building has also facilitated effective knowledge transfer and innovation across the organization. By establishing formal mechanisms for continuous learning and development, Globe has created an environment that supports both individual growth and organizational advancement. This systematic approach to skill development has not only enhanced the company's operational capabilities but has also contributed to its ability to drive innovation and adapt to changing market conditions, providing valuable lessons for organizations undertaking similar digital transformation journeys.

D. Public-Private Partnership Development

Globe Telecom's transformation journey exemplifies the vital role of structured public-private partnerships in achieving successful digital transformation outcomes. The company's experience in collaborating with government agencies, actively participating in national digital initiatives, and engaging in policy development processes demonstrates the practical benefits of well-structured partnership approaches. These collaborative efforts have supported Globe's organizational transformation and made significant contributions to the broader development of the digital ecosystem in the Philippines, creating a model for effective public-private engagement in digital transformation initiatives.

The success of these partnerships is deeply rooted in effective cultural transformation, a critical aspect highlighted in Schein's (2010) research on organizational change. Globe's journey from a traditional telecommunications mindset to embracing a digital-first approach while maintaining operational excellence showcases the importance of cultural adaptation in digital transformation. This cultural shift has been fundamental in enabling effective collaboration between public and private sectors, demonstrating how organizational culture can either facilitate or hinder transformation efforts.

The development of these partnerships has created a framework for sustainable digital innovation that balances commercial objectives with public interest. Through structured collaboration mechanisms, Globe has successfully navigated the complex landscape of

regulatory requirements while driving innovation in digital services. This approach has enabled the company to maintain its competitive edge while contributing to national digital transformation goals, demonstrating how public-private partnerships can create value for both corporate stakeholders and the broader society.

These partnerships have also played a crucial role in addressing key challenges in digital transformation, including infrastructure development, regulatory alignment, and digital inclusion. By working closely with government agencies and regulatory bodies, Globe has helped shape policies that support digital innovation while ensuring appropriate oversight and consumer protection. This collaborative approach has proven essential in creating an environment that fosters digital innovation while maintaining necessary regulatory safeguards and promoting inclusive digital growth.

E. Implementation Framework

The successful implementation of digital transformation initiatives requires a comprehensive framework that addresses both policy requirements and economic implications. At its core, policy recommendations must focus on sustained support for digital infrastructure development, ensuring consistent investment in technological capabilities and network expansion. This support should be coupled with the evolution of regulatory frameworks that encourage innovation while maintaining appropriate oversight, allowing businesses to adapt and grow in an increasingly digital environment.

A critical component of the implementation framework is the establishment of comprehensive skill development programs. These programs should address both current workforce needs and anticipate future skill requirements, ensuring a pipeline of qualified professionals capable of driving and maintaining digital transformation initiatives. Parallel to this, the development of robust public-private partnership mechanisms becomes essential, creating collaborative platforms that leverage the strengths of both sectors to accelerate digital adoption and innovation.

The economic implications of implementing these recommendations are far-reaching and multifaceted. In terms of economic growth and market development, successful implementation can drive increased productivity, create new market opportunities, and enhance competitive dynamics across sectors. The strengthening of the innovation ecosystem through these measures can catalyze technological advancement, attract investment, and foster

entrepreneurship, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of growth and development.

Workforce capability enhancement, achieved through targeted skill development programs and industry-academia collaboration, can significantly improve labor market outcomes and economic productivity. This enhanced human capital base becomes a key driver of sustained economic growth and innovation. Furthermore, the implementation framework's focus on market efficiency and accessibility can lead to reduced transaction costs, improved market integration, and broader participation in the digital economy, particularly benefiting previously underserved segments of the population.

These economic implications underscore the importance of a well-coordinated and comprehensive implementation approach. The framework's success depends on the synchronized execution of policy initiatives, supported by appropriate resource allocation and stakeholder engagement. Regular monitoring and evaluation of outcomes will be crucial to ensure the framework's effectiveness and allow for necessary adjustments as the digital transformation landscape continues to evolve.

F. Long-term Impact and Sustainability

The comprehensive analysis of Globe Telecom's digital transformation journey yields important insights for ensuring long-term impact and sustainability in digital transformation initiatives. These conclusions and recommendations, grounded in both empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks, provide a detailed roadmap for policy makers and industry leaders navigating similar transformational journeys. The successful implementation of these recommendations necessitates a sustained commitment from both public and private sector stakeholders, coupled with regular review and adjustment mechanisms that respond to evolving market developments and technological changes.

Drawing from Davenport and Westerman's (2018) research on the challenges of balancing legacy operations with digital innovation, the sustainability framework emphasizes approaches that maintain operational excellence while pursuing innovation initiatives. This balanced approach is crucial for ensuring that digital transformation efforts create lasting value and sustainable competitive advantages. The framework recognizes that sustainable development in digital transformation requires careful orchestration of multiple factors, including technological infrastructure, human capital development, and regulatory alignment.

Long-term sustainability depends on creating resilient systems that can adapt to technological changes while maintaining operational stability. This involves developing flexible regulatory frameworks that can accommodate innovation while ensuring system stability, investing in continuous workforce development to maintain relevant skills, and establishing robust feedback mechanisms to evaluate and adjust strategies as needed. The framework also emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between rapid digital advancement and sustainable resource utilization, ensuring that transformation initiatives contribute to long-term economic and social development goals.

The sustainable impact of digital transformation initiatives extends beyond immediate technological improvements to encompass broader societal benefits. This includes enhanced market accessibility, improved service delivery, and increased economic participation across different segments of society. Regular assessment of these broader impacts helps ensure that transformation initiatives remain aligned with sustainable development goals while maintaining their economic viability and operational effectiveness.

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