



Knowledge for Impact: Helping the Public and Private Sector Close the Disaster Protection Gap Faster

When devastating earthquakes struck Morocco and Türkiye in 2023, the world witnessed not only the tragic loss of life and livelihoods—but also the value of preparedness. Both countries had insurance programs in place, which helped offset some of the financial burden and enabled quicker recovery. Yet, for many other emerging economies, a large disaster protection gap persists. Too often, governments shoulder the majority of post-disaster costs alone—stretching resources and slowing the path to recovery.

Neither the public nor private sector can bear these losses alone. **Public-private partnerships (PPPs)** offer a critical path forward. They address challenges of affordability, increase access to insurance, and help countries better manage major disaster risks. But how can countries implement effective reforms—fast?

A Platform for Change: Introducing the DRF Program under the WBG Academy

At the core of scaling Disaster Risk Finance (DRF) reforms is knowledge—and the ability to share it. In response, the World Bank Group launched the Disaster Risk Finance Academy Program to support countries in designing and implementing affordable disaster risk insurance solutions, with Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) playing a central role. **A key objective of the program is to help countries replicate and scale proven solutions—drawing on lessons from countries like Türkiye and Morocco and bringing these insights to others.**

Focusing on countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Europe and Central Asia (ECA) regions, this program **is among the first WBG Academy Impact Programs**. It brought together policymakers, insurers, development partners, and academics for an **intensive 5-day learning experience**. Some participating countries have already launched Public-Private Insurance Programs (PPIPs), while others are still shaping their early concepts. Regardless of where they are in the journey, the program accelerates progress by providing practical tools, peer learning opportunities, and access to global expertise.

This initiative is part of the World Bank Group’s broader effort to strengthen financial resilience and close the protection gap—before disasters strike.



7. Support to MSMEs – the most vulnerable, the major source of employment in the Pacific and Africa). Protection could be targeted for both the MSMEs and for people (and enterprises) who are vulnerable to natural disasters.

8. Establishing capacity-building workshops, technical trainings, and research to enhance the knowledge and skills of stakeholders.

How the DRF Academy Program Accelerates Reforms

1. Critical Knowledge for Scalable Solutions

The **DRF Academy** builds a foundation of shared understanding across diverse stakeholders. It introduces frameworks for developing PPIP solutions and guides participants through case studies and real-life examples. One session, for instance, focused on the key aspects of developing effective public-private partnerships (PPPs), combining a theoretical introduction with hands-on breakout discussions. These covered critical areas such as risk understanding, product design and development, and underwriting and claims management—providing practical insights into the building blocks of sustainable insurance systems. These learnings were further enriched by partnerships with established schemes like the **Türkish Catastrophe Insurance Pool** and the **Insurance Development Forum**, which co-hosted the event, and academic collaboration with local institutions, including **ITU** and **Bogaziçi** universities.

2. Peer Learning Across Borders

One of the **DRF Academy Programs’** most powerful elements is peer exchange. Participants from different regions, facing similar climate and disaster risks, had the opportunity to share experiences and learn directly from one another. For example, a representative from an Eastern European country developing its first sovereign risk transfer plan was able to consult with peers from Morocco, which has already implemented a nationwide catastrophe insurance program—turning knowledge into applicable models back home.

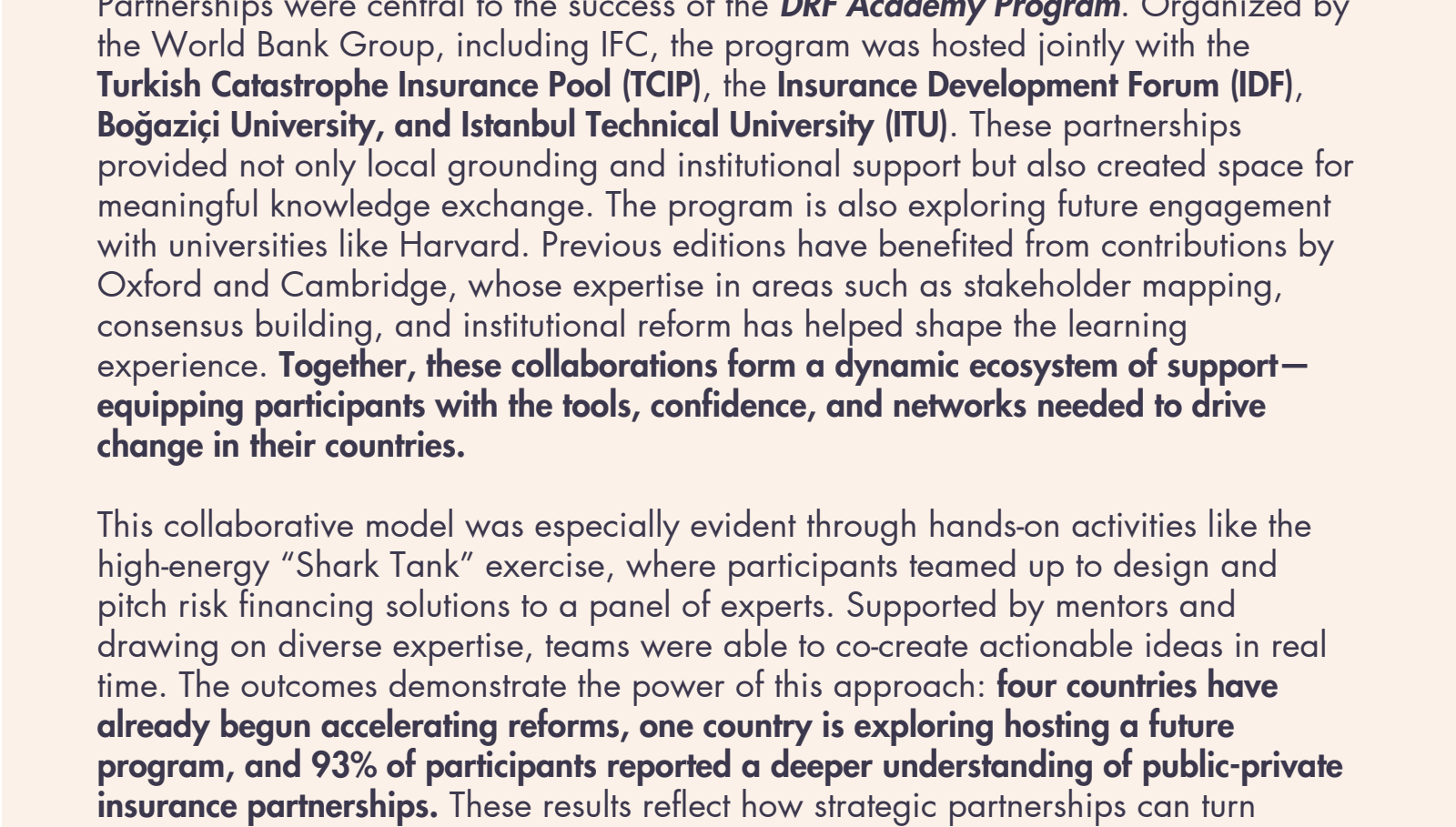
3. Private Sector Engagement

Real-time interactions with global insurance providers brought in fresh perspectives and added depth to discussions. A session led by the **Insurance Development Forum** opened space for candid exchanges between public and private stakeholders—helping demystify how each side thinks, negotiates risk, and measures success. This helped lay the groundwork for trust and future collaboration. Private sector experts also shared technical insights on pricing, risk modeling, and market development—equipping participants with the tools needed to design commercially viable and inclusive solutions.

4. Knowledge Into Action

The **DRF Academy Program** is not just about learning—it’s about doing. Country teams left the program with a clearer understanding of what steps are needed to move forward. For instance, one MENA country is now preparing to pilot an agricultural insurance product in collaboration with local insurers and its Ministry of Finance. Another country is working on draft legislation to enable stronger private sector participation in national DRF strategies.

The Power of Partnerships



Partnerships were central to the success of the **DRF Academy Program**. Organized by the World Bank Group, including IFC, the program was hosted jointly with the **Türkish Catastrophe Insurance Pool (TCIP)**, the **Insurance Development Forum (IDF)**, **Bogaziçi University**, and **Istanbul Technical University (ITU)**. These partnerships provided not only local grounding and institutional support but also created space for meaningful knowledge exchange. The program is also exploring future engagement with universities like Harvard. Previous editions have benefited from contributions by Oxford and Cambridge, whose expertise in areas such as stakeholder mapping, consensus building, and institutional reform has helped shape the learning experience. **Together, these collaborations form a dynamic ecosystem of support—equipping participants with the tools, confidence, and networks needed to drive change in their countries.**

This collaborative model was especially evident through hands-on activities like the high-energy “Shark Tank” exercise, where participants teamed up to design and pitch risk financing solutions to a panel of experts. Supported by mentors and drawing on diverse expertise, teams were able to co-create actionable ideas in real time. The outcomes demonstrate the power of this approach: **four countries have already begun accelerating reforms, one country is exploring hosting a future program, and 93% of participants reported a deeper understanding of public-private insurance partnerships.** These results reflect how strategic partnerships can turn global knowledge into practical, country-led action.



Voices From the Field: Partner Perspectives

As disaster and climate risks continue to evolve, the strength of the Disaster Risk Finance Program lies in its ability to **bring together diverse partners from across sectors and regions**. Public-private collaboration is not only a recurring theme but a proven pathway to building resilient financial systems. In this section, we spotlight two key partners—**TARSİM**, Türkiye’s agricultural insurance pool, and **Swiss Re**, a global leader in reinsurance—whose insights illustrate the value of partnership, innovation, and early engagement in designing sustainable disaster risk finance solutions. Their reflections highlight how collaborative models are already translating into real-world impact, from expanding insurance coverage in Türkiye to piloting climate-resilient schemes in Central Asia and the Middle East.

TARSİM: Bridging the Gap Between Policy and Practice in Agricultural Insurance

Türkiye’s state-supported agricultural insurance system, **TARSİM**, has become a cornerstone of resilience for farmers facing increasingly severe climate risks. But despite strong government backing and wide-ranging coverage, awareness among producers remains a critical challenge. In this conversation, **TARSİM** reflects on the power of public-private collaboration, the importance of targeted outreach, and what it takes to scale up agricultural insurance across regions and crops. From flexible payment options to regional awareness campaigns, **TARSİM** is working to ensure that no farmer is left behind. Discover more in the **full interview** with **TARSİM**.



Swiss Re: Why Public-Private Partnerships Are the Future of Risk Finance

Swiss Re sees early engagement as the key to building disaster risk finance systems that are scalable, affordable, and resilient. In this **interview**, two of their public sector specialists share how international collaboration—from IDF-supported schemes in Uzbekistan to innovative parametric covers in Syria—is helping governments manage contingent liabilities and safeguard development gains. Their message is clear: disaster risk finance cannot succeed without the private sector at the table from day one.



They also underscored the importance of thoughtful scheme design—emphasizing tools like risk layering, diversification, and clearly defined partner roles. Drawing from real-world partnerships with governments, UN agencies, and insurers, Swiss Re illustrated **how trust, transparency, and early collaboration can lead to innovative solutions tailored to country needs**. These approaches not only strengthen financial resilience but also pave the way for scalable, sustainable reforms grounded in local ownership. Discover more in the **full interview** with Swiss Re.

Looking Ahead

With over 50 participants from 14 countries, the **Disaster Risk Finance Academy Program** demonstrated that when the right partnerships are in place—across public and private sectors, regions, and technical disciplines—**knowledge becomes action**. **The momentum sparked in Istanbul is already translating into early reforms, new pilots, and stronger collaboration.** As countries continue to confront rising climate and disaster risks, platforms like the DRF Academy Program under the WBG Academy will remain critical for closing protection gaps and shaping the next generation of inclusive, sustainable financial resilience strategies.

Explore More

Access key materials and highlights from the DRF Academy Program:

- **Event Recap** – A summary of the DRF Academy Program’s goals, structure, highlights, and key outcomes [here](#)
- **Program Overview & Presentation Decks** – Key takeaways from each day, including discussion highlights and country contributions. Downloadable slides from expert-led sessions, case studies, and technical briefings [here](#)
- **Blog** – In-depth reflections and partner interviews spotlighting the role of public-private collaboration in disaster risk finance [here](#)
- **LinkedIn Posts** – Social media highlights and key moments shared throughout the week [here](#)
- **Video Interviews** – Hear directly from participants and partners about their experiences and takeaways [Just released!](#)
- **Photo Gallery** – A visual snapshot of the Academy in action [here](#)



“What we saw at the DRF Academy Program was the power of peer exchange in action. Countries at different stages of disaster risk finance development were able to learn from one another, supported by global expertise and private sector insights. This kind of structured dialogue is essential to closing the protection gap at scale. The Program under the WBG Academy, reinforced that meaningful reform requires more than technical knowledge, it takes trust, collaboration, and sustained partnerships. By bringing public and private actors together in a hands-on format, the session in Istanbul helped translate plans into practical next steps.”

—**Fatou Assah**, Global Head, Advisory Services, FIG-IFC

