

**“Enhancing Risk Awareness and Risk Reduction Education on Natural  
Catastrophes: Turkish Experiences**

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The earthquake map of Turkey demonstrates that 95% of Turkey’s population, 98% of its large industrial centers and 93% of its dams are exposed to severe earthquake risk. Following the devastating Marmara earthquakes in 1999, the Turkish government started to utilize the insurance system in a more active manner to cover catastrophe losses. In this context, the Turkish Catastrophe Insurance Pool (TCIP) was launched by the Turkish government in cooperation with the World Bank, in 2000. TCIP is a compulsory insurance program that provides earthquake coverage to householders up to certain limits and for affordable premiums depending on risk zones, construction types and gross areas of houses.

TCIP is an important example for a functioning public-private partnership. While public authorities are responsible for the establishment of the legal framework, conduct of regulatory supervision, provision of risk management support and disaster management; the private sector carries out the sales functions, operational services, awareness campaigns and claims management as well as the provision of risk management support.

TCIP has a very important role in enhancing risk awareness. Since its inception in 2000, TCIP has been organizing publicity campaigns, meetings and seminars across the country to increase public awareness about earthquake risk and insurance. The Turkish insurance sector also supports these initiatives and carries out similar activities like the organization of national and international conferences, publication of books, operation of simulation centers and organization of seminars across the country.

However, there exist certain challenges like enforcement problems, inadequate legal framework, lack of strong state support, relatively low insurance penetration rate and inadequate insurance awareness in society. Despite these challenges, TCIP is a functioning and viable model for countries exposed to catastrophe risks. Creation of a good risk classification system and a disciplined control mechanism supported with adequate enforcement rules; determination of affordable premiums; establishment of a well-functioning public-private partnership and effective risk awareness initiatives are key components for success.