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## **Victim – Oriented Practice in Judicial System: Judiciary Interview Rooms**

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Children, women who have been victimized and other vulnerable groups such as refugees and disabled persons who are in contact with the legal system may be secondarily victimized by the complicated and harsh approach of the legal system. In Turkish legislations, the principle of the best interest of the child has been adopted for all procedures regarding children. The most recent development in this area is the establishment of judiciary interview rooms. (JIRs)

### Main objectives of the JIRs are:

- Applying child-friendly judicial procedures in line with the principles of child`s best interest.
- Conducting interviews under proper conditions and methods convenient for the mental/physical conditions of the interviewee.
- Prevention of the secondary victimization.
- Identification of protection needs and referral to related services.

### JIRs have three units:

Waiting Room: Multipurpose room where the interviewees and other parties wait.

Interview Room: The room where an expert can conduct a one-on-one interview with the interviewee and where interview is audio-visually recorded.

Observation Room: The room with technical equipment where judges, public prosecutors and lawyers can observe interviews on the screen and ask their questions to the interviewee with the assistance of expert and through the sound system.

Ministry of Justice Victim Rights Department started “Strengthening Capacity and Skills of Professionals on Judicial Interview” Project in 2017. The main goal of the project was to build necessary grounds for high quality implementation of the judicial interview rooms and to bring the procedures in line with the rights and well-being of children, women and other concerned vulnerable groups. The specific objectives were; enhance knowledge and skills on specific interview skills of the experts in justice system, develop training manuals and guidelines for various professionals and creating an M&E and a supervision framework for quality assurance.

414 judges and public prosecutors, 518 court experts and 147 JIR coordinators have attended in training programs.

Due to the successful outcomes and positive feedback right after the activation of the JIRs, the Ministry of Justice decided to increase the number of JIRs to 59. AGOs became active as of 03.04.2017 and so far more than 8000 interviews have been conducted already.