‘Only 18 rape cases prosecuted since 1960’

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A group, Centre for Advancement of Development Rights (CEDAR), has said only 18 rape cases have gotten a conviction since 1960.  
  
The group made this known at the presentation of its Family Reform National Case Study through a research Lawyer and Executive Director for a non-governmental Organisation, Spaces for Change, Victoria Ohaeri.  
  
It alleged that the victims were yet to get justice and the perpetrators either remain at large or go scot free, because “our justice system focuses a lot on punishment”.  
  
Delivering a paper entitled: Why are Legislations Prohibiting-Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria not Effective? Ohaeri said Lagos in 2015 recorded 4,035 Domestic Violence cases ranging from rape, child abuse, sexual assault, sexual abuse, defilement and divorces but little or no convictions were made.  
  
She quoted the National Democratic Health Survey which says 28 per cent of women have experienced domestic violence.  
  
Ohaeri said: “Our findings show that churches hold more matrimonial cases than the court. The spiritual leaders who use their discretion or “what God tells them” do not have the expertise. Marriage mediation is a skill and not a calling.”  
  
CEDAR Director, Joy Ngwakwe called for harmonisation between the customary, statutory and religious laws to be able to effectively carry out justice on offenders.