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Upstream investment and pipeline security cited as keys to Nigeria's 3 mmbopd target

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Nigeria's ambition to reach three million barrels of oil per day (3 mmbopd) is gaining analytical momentum, with both the country's upstream regulator and independent energy experts pointing to the structural changes required to achieve the target.

The Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) has announced plans to sponsor oil research as part of its institutional commitment to bridging the technical and operational gaps holding back Nigerian production. As the upstream regulator, NUPRC's research agenda is expected to influence licensing conditions, well programme approvals, field development guidelines, and local content requirements — shaping how operators and service companies engage with the basin over the medium term.

Energy expert Oluwaseun Dania has outlined the practical levers that must be pulled to make the target achievable. According to Dania, sustained upstream investment, accelerated oilfield development, improved pipeline security, and the resolution of broader operational constraints in the petroleum sector are the central requirements. The emphasis on pipeline security is particularly significant: infrastructure theft and vandalism have been among the most damaging factors suppressing Nigerian output in recent years, and no production increase can be sustained without materially reducing losses across the pipeline network.

Together, the NUPRC initiative and expert commentary paint a picture of a target that is technically feasible but contingent on simultaneous progress across

regulatory, investment, and security dimensions. The 3 mmbopd goal would represent a substantial step up from current production levels and would require significant new drilling activity, field rehabilitation, and supply chain improvements across the upstream sector. Research sponsorship by NUPRC is one mechanism for building the knowledge base to support that uplift, but it sits alongside the more immediate challenge of protecting and maintaining existing infrastructure.

No specific budget figures, research institutions, or timelines have been disclosed by NUPRC regarding its research programme. The scope of sponsored research — including whether it will involve universities, industry bodies, or international technical organisations — remains to be detailed. What is clear from both the regulatory announcement and expert analysis is that Nigeria's path to 3 mmbopd is a multi-dimensional challenge requiring coordinated action across investment, operations, and security.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

Norwegian companies active in well services, drilling, subsea infrastructure, and pipeline integrity now have a clearer picture of where Nigerian demand will concentrate — upstream investment acceleration and pipeline security are immediate operational priorities alongside the NUPRC's longer-term research agenda. Service companies with pipeline inspection, integrity management, or anti-theft technology capabilities have a specific angle worth exploring with active operators in the Niger Delta. Monitoring NUPRC research outputs and engaging with both the regulator and operating companies remains the right near-term posture.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Pipeline integrity and inspection companies:** Pipeline security and loss prevention are explicitly cited as prerequisites for production growth — companies offering inspection, monitoring, and integrity management services have a direct commercial angle with operators in the Niger Delta.
- **Drilling and well services companies:** Accelerated oilfield development and new drilling activity are central to the 3 mmbopd roadmap, creating demand for drilling contractors, well services, and completion technology providers.

- **Field rehabilitation specialists:** Sustaining and growing output from existing fields requires workover, artificial lift, and brownfield redevelopment expertise — a space where Norwegian subsea and topside service companies are well positioned.

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