

TRANSFORMATIONAL GROWTH LEADERSHIP

Solving the Global Water Crisis Through Innovation: Aeronero's Transformational Growth Journey

An Interview with

Dr. Durga Das

Chief Executive Officer

Aeronero

in conversation with

Fredrick Royan

Associate Partner and

*Global Practice Area Leader, Sustainability
and Circular Economy at Frost & Sullivan*





As global water scarcity intensifies driven by climate volatility, urbanization, and aging water infrastructure, **Aeronero** is redefining how water is sourced, distributed, and consumed. From households and hospitality to defense and last-mile communities, the company's innovation-led approach shows that water security can be mobile, affordable, and inclusive, without reliance on pipes, tankers, or centralized infrastructure.

In this exclusive Transformational Growth Leadership (TGL) conversation, **Dr. Durga Das**, CEO of **Aeronero**, sits down with **Fredrick Royan**, Associate Partner and Global Practice Area Leader, Sustainability and Circular Economy at **Frost & Sullivan**, to discuss the company's bold vision for water independence and how **atmospheric water generation, decentralized systems, and intelligent technologies** are converging to expand access to safe water at scale.

Transformational Change: Powering Water Independence with Innovation

Frederick Royan: We've been tracking Aeronero closely, and that's what led us to shortlist the company for a Best Practices Recognition under Transformational Innovation Leadership. To begin, how do you see Aeronero disrupting not just the water sector, but atmospheric water generation itself?

Dr. Durga Das: Water is in a global crisis that demands global thinking. When Aeronero began, the intent was to solve Chennai's water problem, but very quickly we realized this challenge was far bigger, spanning California, Africa, deserts, and high-altitude regions like Leh-Ladakh. A global problem cannot be solved with incremental thinking.

What differentiates us is our commitment to **innovation under extreme conditions**. Most atmospheric water solutions work only under ideal humidity and temperature. We asked a different question: Can water be generated reliably in deserts, in cold regions, and in mobility scenarios? That question drove everything, from technology to design.

Frost & Sullivan's **Transformational Growth Leadership Program** aims to honor visionary business leaders who possess the foresight and leadership acumen to drive positive change within their organizations. The leaders we celebrate hail from diverse sectors and company sizes, yet they all share an unwavering commitment to innovation and excellence.

Designing Scalable Water Systems Across Geographies

Frederick Royan: How have these megatrends created new challenges and opportunities for Aeronero?

Dr. Durga Das: The opportunity lies in designing solutions that work everywhere, not just under ideal conditions. The challenge is speed. The water crisis is already here, and innovation must move faster than conventional infrastructure development.

“Water is a fundamental right. Innovation must be empathetic, inclusive, and fast. If we truly commit to solving this problem together, we can ensure that no one is left without access to safe water.”

— Dr. Durga Das, CEO, Aeronero

Best Practices Revealed: Rethinking Atmospheric Water Generation

Frederick Royan: Many players talk about atmospheric water generation, but Aeronero seems to approach it differently. Can you explain how your technology stands apart?

Dr. Durga Das: There are fundamentally three methods to extract water from air: condensation, desiccation, and hybrid approaches. Most companies focus on just one. Aeronero is unique because we hold patents in both condensation and desiccation, with our desiccation IP co-developed with IIT Madras.

This allows us to hybridize by combining the strengths of low-humidity desiccation with natural condensation. That hybrid capability gives us an edge in performance, scalability, and mobility. It is what enables us to serve applications ranging from homes and hospitality to defense and remote regions.

Competitive Differentiation: From Homes to Mobility

Frederick Royan: You often emphasize mobility and access. How does that translate into real-world applications?

Dr. Durga Das: Water independence must travel with people. That's where mobility becomes critical. Whether it's soldiers in remote locations or civilians in underserved areas, access to water shouldn't depend on pipes or tankers.

Our vision extends even further. My personal aspiration is to one day create a simple water bottle that a schoolchild can place outside, anywhere in the world, and have safe drinking water. If a child can say, "I may not have food today, but I have water," that alone changes lives.

Frederick Royan: Let's talk about market gaps. How does Aeronero address unmet needs, especially at the household level?

Dr. Durga Das: The Bubble is our response to household water independence. It produces 20 liters of alkaline mineral water per day and is lightweight and portable. It is also designed so that anyone in the household, especially women, can maintain it without waiting for service technicians.

We pair it with solar and offer it on a subscription model priced at ₹3,000. This removes cost barriers entirely, with no electricity cost and no water cost. The goal is to change the mindset from "this is not for me" to "I deserve safe water."



Delivering Affordable Water Solutions Through Distributed Innovation

Frederick Royan: *What are your aspirational growth goals for Aeronero as you scale?*

Dr. Durga Das: Our goal is to become a global innovation leader in water independence. That means serving homes, hospitality, defense, and communities across geographies, including India, the Middle East, the U.S., Latin America, deserts, and cold regions.

We want Aeronero to demonstrate that advanced water solutions can be affordable, scalable, and inclusive. Growth, for us, is about reach and impact, not just numbers.

Frederick Royan: *How do you see Aeronero's leadership evolving over the next few years?*

Dr. Durga Das: True leadership today requires rethinking how companies scale. Centralized models will not work for a crisis as urgent as water. We believe in distributed leadership through regional teams, local manufacturing, and partnerships across continents.

This approach is not about holding technology tightly. It is about sharing responsibly, enabling local ecosystems, and moving quickly. The water crisis doesn't give us the luxury of slow, conventional scaling.

Enhancing Customer Experience with Intelligent Systems

Frederick Royan: *Customer experience is a key evaluation criterion for us. How are you ensuring reliability and ease of use?*

Dr. Durga Das: Every Aeronero system is IoT [Internet of Things]-enabled. We monitor air quality, humidity, water quality, generation, and dispensing in real time. AI helps us predict maintenance needs before a customer even notices an issue.

Customers receive app notifications when to change a filter, how to do it, and even step-by-step videos. **The goal is complete empowerment: safe water without anxiety.**

Growth Strategies: Scaling Aeronero's Empathy-driven Brand Identity

Frederick Royan: *Finally, brand equity. How are you shaping Aeronero's identity as you scale globally?*

Dr. Durga Das: Aeronero is not just a commercial venture; it is a mission. We believe in solving the problem while we grow, not after we succeed. That is why we actively engage in research, humanitarian work, and community-based water initiatives.

Our brand stands for empathy-driven innovation. Water for all, always. That isn't a tagline; it is a responsibility we carry into every product, partnership, and geography.

Looking Ahead: Building a Future of Safe Water for All

Frederick Royan: *If you could leave the world with one message, what would it be?*

Dr. Durga Das: Water is a fundamental right. Innovation must be empathetic, inclusive, and fast. If we truly commit to solving this problem together, we can ensure that no one is left without access to safe water.

Frederick Royan: *Durga, this has been an insightful discussion. Aeronero clearly embodies the spirit of transformational growth, where innovation, leadership, and impact converge. We look forward to taking this forward in our Best Practices Recognition process.*

Dr. Durga Das: Thank you, Frederick. We appreciate the opportunity and the thoughtful engagement. The journey has just begun.

Closing Reflection

As Frost & Sullivan's Transformational Growth Leadership series emphasizes, true innovation lies in uniting technology with execution. Aeronero exemplifies that vision. Through portable solutions, AI-enabled monitoring, and scalable deployment, the company is helping communities, businesses, and even defense and remote regions achieve what was once out of reach: **reliable, affordable, and inclusive access to water anywhere in the world.**





Dr. Durga Das | Chief Executive Officer of Aeronero

Dr. Durga Das is **Founder & CEO of Aeronero**, an atmospheric water generation company serving 1.5 million people across India with nearly 500 installations. With over 30 years of entrepreneurial experience, including 25 years scaling technology ventures in Silicon Valley, she led the development of ConDessa Technology, the world's only hybrid condensation and desiccation system for reliable, low-energy water production in low-humidity and remote areas. She also founded WODER, a UK nonprofit improving water access for refugees. Her leadership has been recognized by the UN SDG Challenge, Outlook Business (Deep Women Leaders), and NEXTLEAP.



Fredrick Royan | Associate Partner and Global Practice Area Leader, Sustainability and Circular Economy at Frost & Sullivan

Fredrick Royan is **Associate Partner of the Sustainability and Circular Economy practice at Frost & Sullivan** and the Smart Water Network (SWAN) Council Chair. With over 20 years analyzing the global water sector, he led the launch of the Smart Water Program in 2010 and now shapes the Global Water Research Program, publishing authoritative reports on Smart Water Grids and related segments. He holds a master's in Environmental Protection and Management from the University of Edinburgh as a Centenary Chevening Scholar and has also been conferred the Frost & Sullivan Fellowship.

How Will You Equip Your Organization to Thrive Amid the Global Water Crisis?

From delivering **portable water solutions** to enabling **AI-driven monitoring and maintenance**, Aeronero's transformation as a water independence innovator demonstrates its commitment to empowering defense, communities, and businesses across globe with safe, reliable, and inclusive water access.

Frost & Sullivan's **Transformational Growth Leadership (TGL)** program helps organizations lead through this transformation by bridging innovation, strategy, and execution for sustained growth.

Next steps on your growth journey:

- ▶ **Subscribe** to our Energy & Environment Growth Opportunity Newsletter.
- ▶ **Join the Growth Council**—an exclusive community of innovators shaping global water solutions.
- ▶ **Share your transformation journey** with a global audience.
- ▶ **Engage with our Sustainability & Circular Economy experts** to explore new opportunities, technologies, and actionable strategies for resilient water access.

Annexure: Water Independence Through Decentralized Solutions

Aeronero's vision for water independence reflects a global shift toward decentralized and technology-enabled water systems. To support leaders navigating this transformation, Frost & Sullivan offers strategic insights into water and wastewater infrastructure, intelligent monitoring systems, and commercial water solutions.

- ▶ Growth Opportunities in the Smart Real-time Water Monitoring Sensors Industry
- ▶ Growth Opportunities in the Membrane-based Water and Wastewater Systems Market
- ▶ Latin American Waste Recycling and Circular Economy Markets Outlook
- ▶ Top 10 Growth Opportunities in the Global Residential, Commercial HoReCa, and Institutional Water Solutions Markets

Each of these analyses complements the themes of this TGL and provides a strategic roadmap for organizations shaping the future of global water systems.

YOUR TRANSFORMATIONAL GROWTH JOURNEY STARTS HERE

Frost & Sullivan's Growth Pipeline Engine, transformational strategies and best-practice models drive the generation, evaluation, and implementation of powerful growth opportunities.

Is your company prepared to survive and thrive through the coming transformation?

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