

Informe Express #2 15-enero-2019

Zero Mass Water comercializa paneles solares que generan agua potable a partir del aire

Oportunidades de negocio e impacto para el sector de agua, saneamiento e infraestructura:

La startup [Zero Mass Water](#) desarrolló un sistema de agua potable que utiliza paneles solares denominados "Source" para extraer agua del aire, purificarla y suministrarla a hogares. Esta tecnología podrá contribuir a solucionar el acceso a agua segura que afecta a más de 2,100 millones de personas a nivel global y mejorar su calidad y condiciones de vida.

Zero Mass Water es [una de las 9 startups que recibe fondos de un capital de riesgo](#) liderado por Bill Gates de Microsoft y otros inversionistas para mitigar los efectos del cambio climático.

El costo de instalación de Source es de \$2,500 en los Estados Unidos, tiene capacidad de generar entre 2 y 5 litros por día y un tiempo de vida útil de 20 años.

Una de las ventajas de este invento es que permite proveer de agua segura en lugares de difícil acceso sin necesidad de requerir grandes inversiones para expandir redes e infraestructura, además de que es un agua renovable.

These solar panels pull clean drinking water from the air



The Zero Mass Water solar panels are backed by Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates.

Image: Zero Mass Water

- [Zero Mass Water](#) produces solar panels that pull water out of the air, filter it, and deliver it to your home faucet.
- The startup, which is backed by a \$1 billion fund led by Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos, recently created a new sensor that allows you to monitor the quality of your water.
- The company sees its technology as a way to help solve the global water crisis, which has left more than 2 billion people without access to safe drinking water in their homes.

The [global water crisis](#) has wreaked havoc on communities around the world, from homes in Flint, Michigan, to megacities like Tokyo and São Paulo.

The United Nations estimated that [2.1 billion people](#) live without safe drinking water in their homes — a situation with severe health implications that can also limit economic prosperity.

Citizens with [access to clean water](#) have a better chance of escaping poverty, fending off disease, and pursuing an education.

As the crisis escalates, many billionaire investors and tech companies have jumped at the chance to get involved. In September, a \$1 billion fund led by [Bill Gates](#), [Jeff Bezos](#), and other investors [helped finance the efforts of Zero Mass Water](#), a startup making solar panels that [pull clean drinking water](#) from the air.

The panel arrays, known as Source, use sunlight to harvest water from air vapor. The harvested vapor is then sterilized and turned to liquid, which is stored in a reservoir that connects to your home faucet.

For \$2,000 (plus around \$500 for installation), Source can deliver about 2 to 5 liters of water daily. That's the equivalent of up to 10 water bottles.

Since launching the product in 2015, Zero Mass Water has gone on to install its panels in 18 different countries, from an orphanage in Lebanon to multimillion-dollar mansions in California. The product is [available to order online](#), but Zero Mass Water also works with developers, local governments, and nonprofits to deliver Source to at-risk communities.

Earlier this week, the startup unveiled a new sensor that allows customers to monitor the quality and safety of their drinking water. This data is then aggregated into a daily report, which is available on the Zero Mass Water app.



Many schools in Baltimore and Detroit have had to turn off their water taps. Image: Zero Mass Water

At a time when even the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [can't say for sure](#) if your water is safe to drink, access to real-time data is critical.

In many cases, people who are worried about the quality of their water resort to purchasing plastic water bottles. Not only is this bad for the environment, but it's also not much better than [drinking out of the tap](#).

According to the [Centers for Disease Control](#), "there are no requirements that bottled water quality data be reported to any federal agency or to the public" in the US. Even bottles with the label "purified water" can be treated in several different ways.

In an [interview with Business Insider](#), the famed clean-water advocate Erin Brockovich advised consumers to "use your own common sense" when it comes to determining the safety of tap and bottled water.

"With water, we just sort of look at it, and, if it's approximately clear, we drink it," said Cody Friesen, a material scientist and the CEO at Zero Mass Water. "People are trying to find that next level of security."



Friesen said installing Source panels is cheaper than buying water bottles in the long term. Image: Zero Mass Water

The cost of water bottles can also add up over time. Customers with a Source panel array wind up spending far less than those who purchase plastic water bottles, Friesen said.

He also said the solution isn't as simple as purchasing a countertop water filter. While these devices may improve the taste of water, Friesen said, most are not successful at removing toxins like lead and arsenic.

Source panels also last much longer — around 20 years.

Because of this, Friesen sees his company's technology as a solution for water crises around the world, including in poverty-stricken areas in Morocco, Egypt, and India.

Rather than replacing lead pipes or [rolling out flush toilets](#), Zero Mass Water tackles the pressing need to disseminate clean drinking water to those without immediate access.

"Imagine if you could perfect water anywhere in the world without infrastructure in the driest deserts and wettest jungles," Friesen said. "With [our] sensors, we're about to close the loop on knowing that water is fine."

Fuente: [World Economic Forum](#), 11-enero-2019.

This article is published in collaboration with Business Insider.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author alone and not the World Economic Forum.