

Bricks To Bread International

Changing lives with a brick and a loaf

aka: *BRICKS TO BREAD*



EIN 81-3143615

Location Minneapolis, MN, United States

Year founded 2016

Ruling year 2016

Founder/President Nancy Alvarado

IRS subsection 501(c)(3) Public Charity

Organization type Supporting organizations (general), Public charities

- ✔

Contribution tax deductible
as of December 12, 2025
- ✔

IRS BMF 501(c)(3) Public Charity
as of December 10, 2025
- [Compliance report](#)

Mission

Bricks to Bread’s mission is to facilitate (through education, collaboration, donations, and volunteerism) a sustainable source of income for a deserving woman, in a community where there exist unbroken cycles of poverty and gender inequality, through the creation and launch of a microenterprise bakery—at the heart of which is an outdoor brick oven. In doing so, we alleviate poverty, empower future global leaders, and contribute to a more peaceful cooperative world.

IRS filing requirement
This organization is required to file an IRS Form 990 or 990-EZ.

Our focus

Subject area

Community and economic development

— Entrepreneurship

NTEE codes

Management Services for Small Business/Entrepreneurs (S43)

Geographic area served

Honduras | Costa Rica | Central America (region) | Latin America and the Caribbean (region)

Population served

People living in rural areas | Mothers | Economically disadvantaged people | Unemployed people | Families | Single parents | Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx people | Adults | Children and youth

Awards

2024 AARP Andrus Award for Community Service for Minnesota AARP

Contact

Primary contact

Nancy Alvarado 
Founder/President
612-419-5421
nalvarado@brickstobread.org

Mailing address

3870 Yosemite Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55416
United States
Phone: 612-419-5421
<https://brickstobread.org/>

Primary address

3870 Yosemite Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55416
United States

Congressional district: Minnesota Congressional District 5

Donation payable

Legal name of organization: Bricks to Bread International
EIN for payable organization: 81-3143615
3870 Yosemite Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55416
United States

Program

What we aim to solve

The problems we aim to solve are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals #1 (No Poverty), #2 (Zero Hunger), #3 (Good Health & Well-Being), #5 (Gender Equality), #8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth) and #11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities). Specifically, we work to alleviate the multi-generational cycles of poverty and gender inequality affecting women and families in rural Costa Rica. In regions where economic opportunities are scarce and women face limited access to education and employment, we help create pathways to financial independence through small, sustainable bakery businesses. These enterprises not only lift households out of poverty but also empower women to become community leaders and providers. At the same time, our work helps address food insecurity by bringing fresh baked goods to underserved areas.

Total programs

1

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

Our Empowering Women Entrepreneurs Program helps women launch their own brick-oven bakery enterprises. These women are primarily single heads of households of all ages who possess natural gifts in the kitchen and aspirations of establishing a sustainable source of income. We serve our entrepreneurs with individual business development guidance and professional training, invitation to an annual leadership conference, and ongoing mentoring and networking opportunities for a minimum of three years. What makes Bricks to Bread unique is our long-term commitment to our entrepreneurs' success. We find that when Bricks to Bread is a reliable resource throughout a woman's journey, we increase her likelihood of success. In turn, as she achieves financial stability, she becomes a role model for other women and girls and promotes entrepreneurship and the nutritional benefits of home-baked bread in neighboring areas affected by extreme poverty and gender inequality.

Population served: Adults Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx people Families Single parents People living in extreme poverty
Geographic area served: Costa Rica

Program results

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

Community Members/Beneficiaries

Year	Total impact
2022	2,500
2023	5,905
2024	2,027
2025	1,790

Program results

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

Volunteer Involvement

Year	Total impact
2024	514
2023	333
2022	154
2025	256

Note:

Volunteers (in-country and in the U.S.) build ovens and kitchens, bake bread, plan and host events, raise awareness of our mission, and more.

Program results

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

Women Attending Annual Leadership Conference

Year	Total impact
2024	33
2023	28
2022	15
2025	37

Note:

2022 was the first year of the conference.

Program results

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

Additional Households Breaching Poverty Level

Year	Total impact
2023	8
2024	5

Program results

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs
Oven Projects

Year	Total impact
2024	6
2023	5
2022	3
2025	4

Grants

Bricks To Bread International has received **14 grants** from **8 grantmakers** totaling **\$225,002** over the most recent 5 years of available data.

Total giving

Total giving by subject

Grants given

\$0 Total grant value	Snapshot Average grant size Midpoint grant size Most common grant size Range	\$0 \$0 \$0 \$0
Grants Recipients	0 0	

Grants received

\$267,052		Snapshot	
Total grant value		Average grant size	\$12,717
		Midpoint grant size	\$1,750
Grants	21	Most common grant size	\$1,000
Funders	10	Range	\$49-\$70.0K

Impact

Goals

What we aim to solve?

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What is the organization aiming to accomplish?

Bricks to Bread aims to address the persistent challenges faced by families in rural Central America, with a primary focus on Costa Rica. In these regions, many households live in deep poverty, lacking reliable access to food, employment, and economic opportunity. Our goal is to create pathways out of poverty by focusing on women—those most often responsible for meeting their families’ daily needs—equipping them to become entrepreneurs, providers, and leaders in their communities. In short, we are committed to alleviating poverty and contributing to a more peaceful, cooperative world by empowering women to create sustainable livelihoods and become agents of change in their communities. To achieve this, we will continue expanding our in-country and U.S.-based partnerships so that we can offer more women access to our entrepreneurship program, providing them with comprehensive training, startup funds, and a lasting support network. These resources lay the foundation for women to turn their talents into thriving brick-oven bakery businesses that not only feed families but uplift entire communities. Central to this model is our objective to provide professional, trained staff and contractors to assist in the planning, construction, and training around the use and maintenance of brick ovens and commercial kitchens—safe, efficient spaces where women can build their futures. These ovens serve as personal assets and instruments of change, enabling women to generate income from their own homes or community-based kitchens, especially in rural areas with few alternatives for employment. We are also focused on empowering women to define and achieve their own version of success. Through long-term mentoring, ongoing training, and personalized guidance, we aim to nurture confidence, independence, and leadership—ensuring every woman in our program has the tools she needs to thrive well beyond our initial involvement. In parallel, we envision a growing movement of global change-makers through our efforts to promote volunteerism and foster an expanded worldview. By deepening cultural exchange in every facet of our programming, we aim to inspire youth and adults alike to engage meaningfully in international service, build bridges between communities, and cultivate lifelong commitments to equity and empathy.

What are the organization's key strategies for making this happen?

Bricks to Bread empowers women in rural Costa Rica to achieve financial independence by providing them with the tools, training, and long-term support needed to build and sustain their own small bakery businesses. Our strategy is rooted in respect for local culture, sustainability, and collaboration. Many women in rural Costa Rica face barriers to formal employment due to household responsibilities and a lack of accessible

opportunities. Yet, these women are often highly skilled in the kitchen, resourceful with limited means, and eager to support their families. Bricks to Bread builds on their strengths by helping them meet the demand for fresh baked goods in their communities. Our oven projects are about more than just baking—they are about owning and managing a small business. We do not deliver a pre-built solution and leave. Instead, we work alongside women to help them develop their business plan and marketing channels; construct efficient, low-maintenance brick ovens and commercial kitchens that meet their needs; and equip them with the knowledge and training to launch and maintain their own small-scale enterprises. We teach skills in baking, entrepreneurship, safety, and basic business management, ensuring that each woman is prepared to run a sustainable operation. Our projects are community-driven and collaborative. U.S. and Costa Rican volunteers participate in a meaningful cultural exchange while working side-by-side with recipients. We also establish local partnerships that support the long-term success of each oven project, including nonprofits, government agencies, and community groups. These partnerships ensure that resources remain available and tailored to each woman's evolving needs. What makes Bricks to Bread's strategy unique is our commitment to the women we serve well beyond the initial planning and after the construction phase. We maintain relationships for years, offering mentorship, shared learning and networking, and best practices to strengthen their business success. By combining practical skill-building with deep, long-term engagement, we enable women not only to lift their families out of poverty but also to become leaders and change-makers in their communities.

Results

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How we listen

- How is your organization using feedback from the people you serve?
- To identify and remedy poor client service experiences
 - To identify bright spots and enhance positive service experiences
 - To make fundamental changes to our programs and/or operations
 - To inform the development of new programs/projects
 - To identify where we are less inclusive or equitable across demographic groups
 - To strengthen relationships with the people we serve
 - To understand people's needs and how we can help them achieve their goals

- Which feedback practices does your organization routinely carry out?
- We collect feedback from the people we serve at least annually
 - We take steps to get feedback from marginalized or under-represented people
 - We aim to collect feedback from as many people we serve as possible
 - We take steps to ensure people feel comfortable being honest with us

- We look for patterns in feedback based on demographics (e.g., race, age, gender, etc.)
- We look for patterns in feedback based on people's interactions with us (e.g., site, frequency of service, etc.)
- We engage the people who provide feedback in looking for ways we can improve in response
- We act on the feedback we receive
- We share the feedback we received with the people we serve
- We tell the people who gave us feedback how we acted on their feedback
- We ask the people who gave us feedback how well they think we responded

What challenges does your organization face in collecting feedback from the people you serve?

- It is difficult to get the people we serve to respond to requests for feedback
- The people we serve do not always have the right technology to respond to our requests for feedback

Board leadership practices

Board Orientation & Education

Does the board conduct a formal orientation for new board members and require all board members to sign a written agreement regarding their roles, responsibilities, and expectations?

Yes

CEO Oversight

Has the board conducted a formal, written assessment of the chief executive within the past year?

N/A

Ethics & Transparency

Have the board and senior staff reviewed the conflict-of-interest policy and completed and signed disclosure statements within the past year?

Yes

Board Composition

Does the board ensure an inclusive board member recruitment process that results in diversity of thought and leadership?

Yes

Board Performance

Has the board conducted a formal, written self-assessment of its performance within the past three years?

N/A

Note: Candid worked with BoardSource, the national leader in nonprofit board leadership and governance, to create this section.

UN Sustainable Development Goals



People

Leadership

Founder/President

Nancy Alvarado

✉ nalvarado@brickstobread.org 

From Nancy Alvarado: "Bricks to Bread truly came out of a love and passion of serving, from the joy that I received supporting women and families while I was in the Peace Corps. It was something that I couldn't let go of, so I brought it to life with Bricks to Bread. It has become that perfect vehicle that not only allows me to continue to serve in a field I'm so passionate about but also gives me the opportunity to bring that same joy to others as they serve and volunteer with us."

Country Director

Ana Grace Alvarado

✉ agalvarado@brickstobread.org 

Ana Grace Alvarado has been part of Bricks to Bread from an early age. From building ovens and participating in fundraising events to being a board member, her experience and expertise make her a natural fit for the position of Country Director. Growing up in the Costa Rican and American cultures and learning from her parents and the incredible women in Bricks to Bread's programs have shaped her excitement for this position. With a background in environmental engineering and experience in public health, Ana Grace brings skills that emphasize sustainability, community engagement, and program evaluation. Her goal is to ensure Bricks to Bread is empowering women in the most impactful way possible —by fostering strong partnerships, prioritizing site visits for both current and potential ovens, and building systems to measure our program successes.

Board members

Brittany Sunderman

Cafe Manager, Joe Sippers
Cafe & Roastery

Elena Valenciano Marin

National Institute for Women
(Costa Rica)

Josefina Rojas Mena

Self-Employed (Costa Rica)

Joyce Lizzi

The National Food Lab

Laura Perez Mena

Forest Bakery (Costa Rica)

Lesley Blanco

Coegi

Nancy Alvarado

SciSci

Pam Wilbur

Retired

Staff

Amy Iori

Development & Communications Consultant

Ana Grace Alvarado

Country Director

Josefina Rojas Mena

Costa Rica In Country Coordinator

Laura Perez

Costa Rica In Country Coordinator

Nancy Alvarado

Founder/President

Oscar Vargas

Costa Rica Build Constructor

Contact

Primary contact

Nancy Alvarado 

Founder/President

612-419-5421

nalvarado@brickstobread.org

Compensation

Officers, directors, trustees, and key employees

Fiscal year ending:

Name	Compensation from the organization	Compensation from related organizations	Other compensation
Josephine Kietzmann Secretary of the Board	\$0	\$0	\$0
Joyce Lizzi Board Member	\$0	\$0	\$0
Lesley Blanco Board Member	\$0	\$0	\$0
Nancy F Alvarado President of the Board	\$0	\$0	\$0
Sara Kietzmann Treasurer of the Board	\$0	\$0	\$0

Source: IRS Form 990

Highest paid employees

There are no highest paid employees recorded for this organization.

Contractors

There are no contractors recorded for this organization.

Fundraisers

There are no fundraisers recorded for this organization

Demographics

SOURCE: Self-reported; last updated 1/23/2026

This organization's leader identifies as:

- White/Caucasian/European
- Heterosexual or straight
- Female
- Person without a disability

This organization's co-leader identifies as:

- Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx
- Female

Race & ethnicity

	Board members	Senior staff	Staff
Total	8	0	4
Asian / Asian American	0	0	0
Black / African American	0	0	0
Hispanic / Latino / Latina / Latinx	4	0	3

	Board members	Senior staff	Staff
Middle Eastern / North African	0	0	0
Multi-racial / multi-ethnic (2+ races / ethnicities)	1	0	0
Native American / American Indian / Alaska Native / Indigenous	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	0	0	0
White / Caucasian / European	3	0	1
Decline to state	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0

Gender identity

	Board members	Senior staff	Staff
Total	0	0	4
Female	0	0	3
Male	0	0	1
Non-binary	0	0	0
People who prefer to identify with another gender identity	0	0	0
Decline to state	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0

Financial summary - 2024, Jan 01 - Dec 31

Total giving	Total assets	
\$26,145	\$489,220	
Total liabilities		
\$35,410		
Total revenue	Total expenses	Net gain/loss
\$371,402	\$223,560	+\$147,842

Revenue			Expenses		
Source	Amount	Percent of total	Source	Amount	Percent of total
Contributions	\$343,558	92.5%	Program services	\$193,230	86.4%
Gov't grants	\$0	0%	Administration	\$4,905	2.2%
Program services	\$20,719	5.6%	Fundraising	\$25,425	11.4%
Investments	\$6,425	1.7%			
Special events	\$0	0%			
Sales	\$0	0%			
Other	\$700	0.2%			

Financial trends analysis

Fiscal year: Jan 01 - Dec 31

Business model indicators

Profitability	2022	2023	2024
Unrestricted surplus (deficit) before depreciation	\$52,964	\$86,301	\$61,204
As % of expenses	36.9%	45.6%	29.1%
Unrestricted surplus (deficit) after depreciation	\$49,080	\$82,416	\$47,910
As % of expenses	33.3%	42.6%	21.4%

Revenue composition	2022	2023	2024
Total revenue (unrestricted & restricted)	\$225,982	\$241,506	\$371,402
Total revenue, % change over prior year	0.0%	6.9%	53.8%
Program services revenue	8.3%	17.3%	5.6%
Membership dues	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Investment income	0.0%	1.9%	1.7%
Government grants	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
All other grants and contributions	91.5%	80.4%	92.5%
Other revenue	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%
Expense composition	2022	2023	2024
Total expenses before depreciation	\$143,566	\$189,462	\$210,266
Total expenses, % change over prior year	0.0%	32.0%	11.0%
Personnel	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Professional fees	32.6%	36.3%	37.9%
Occupancy	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%
Interest	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pass-through	6.0%	1.1%	12.4%
All other expenses	61.5%	62.0%	49.1%
Full cost components (estimated)	2022	2023	2024
Total expenses (after depreciation)	\$147,450	\$193,347	\$223,560
One month of savings	\$11,964	\$15,789	\$17,523
Debt principal payment	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fixed asset additions	\$0	\$0	\$48,760
Total full costs (estimated)	\$159,414	\$209,136	\$289,843

Capital structure indicators

Liquidity	2022	2023	2024
Months of cash	20.2	19.9	25.6
Months of cash and investments	20.2	19.9	25.6
Months of estimated liquid unrestricted net assets	4.5	17.4	16.4
Balance sheet composition	2022	2023	2024
Cash	\$241,585	\$313,591	\$447,908
Investments	\$0	\$0	\$0
Receivables	\$20,400	\$0	\$2,274
Gross land, buildings, equipment (LBE)	\$19,423	\$19,434	\$68,194
Accumulated depreciation (as a % of LBE)	61.7%	81.6%	42.8%
Liabilities (as a % of assets)	8.9%	3.5%	7.2%
Unrestricted net assets	\$61,582	\$278,633	\$326,543
Temporarily restricted net assets	N/A	N/A	N/A
Permanently restricted net assets	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total restricted net assets	\$196,217	\$27,325	\$127,267
Total net assets	\$257,799	\$305,958	\$453,810

Key data checks

Key data checks	2022	2023	2024
Material data errors	No	No	No

Source: IRS Forms 990, Forms 990-EZ, Forms 990-PF

[Audited financials](#) [Forms 990](#) [Glossary and formula definitions](#) [Digitizing IRS form 990 data](#) [All organizational documents](#)
