StratSimple

CASE STUDY

CHOP OUT HUNGER

CHOP Out Hunger

Big goals, bite-sized pieces

How a six-year-old nonprofit built its first strategic plan in a day, then cut nearly $1 from the cost of every distributed food bag.

40,000
Kids fed every week across Pennsylvania

~$1
Cut from the cost of every food bag in year one

1 Day
To build the full strategic plan

THE CHALLENGE

Six years in, and strategic planning was intimidating

CHOP Out Hunger feeds about 40,000 kids across Pennsylvania every week, with a small team. In 2025 it turned six without ever having a strategic plan. It was entering a new phase focused on sustainability and longevity, building the structure to outlast any single leader. Founder and CEO Dani Ruhf knew a plan had to come first. But, she had also been avoiding it.

> *"I think I was purposely avoiding it because it was daunting in my head. It was going to be this beast that I wouldn't be able to manage. When you're in a nonprofit this tiny, the thought of taking on one more thing is too much."*
>
> **— Dani Ruhf, Founder & CEO, CHOP Out Hunger**

After meeting StratSimple at a conference in Scranton, CHOP applied for and received a StratSimple grant covering the full planning process.

THE SOLUTION

Listen first, then plan one year at a time

CHOP Out Hunger had always surveyed teachers at the end of the school year. This was the first time it listened formally and more broadly. StratSimple's Virtual Interview Survey gathered input from nearly 100 people and produced 46 pages of written feedback, synthesized into themes the team could plan against.

The leadership team then built the full plan in a single day: one year of objectives and key results instead of a static multi-year document.

> *"I would absolutely recommend StratSimple to every size organization. I've seen very expensive strategic plans, and I've heard about how heavy the lift can be. I didn't feel either of those things here."*
>
> **— Dani Ruhf, Founder & CEO, CHOP Out Hunger**

AT A GLANCE

ORGANIZATION
CHOP Out Hunger (chopouthunger.org)

MISSION
To create an entire generation that doesn't know hunger ,through innovative and collaborative outreach partnerships.

PROJECT
First strategic plan: a one-year plan built in a single day

PARTNERSHIP
StratSimple grant recipient in 2025; renewed for 2026



Danielle (Dani) Ruhf
Founder & CEO, CHOP Out Hunger

All quotes in this case study are from Dani.

HOW IT WORKED

From a daunting idea to a weekly rhythm

STEP 1

Listening beyond the teacher survey

For the first time, the agency went beyond its end-of-year teacher survey. Nearly 100 people responded in their own words: 46 pages of feedback, synthesized into clear themes.

STEP 2

A full plan in one day

In one facilitated session, the team turned those themes into a one-year plan, with StratSimple challenging each goal to confirm it moved CHOP Out Hunger toward its long-term direction.

STEP 3

Results first, then actions

CHOP Out Hunger committed to measurable key results rather than a list of activities, then broke each one into small action items inside StratSimple.

STEP 4

Board reports that drive conversation

CHOP Out Hunger moved to quarterly board meetings and shares the StratSimple board report each quarter, so board members see where the plan is on track and where it needs support.

THE OUTCOME

Close to target, even with two key people out

Two people central to CHOP Out Hunger's goals were out for months, yet as a team they stayed close to their targets. Cost per bag became a shared goal: accounting re-shopped every bill, and vans that used to return empty now haul cardboard and pallets that the agency sells. Cost per bag is down almost a full dollar.

> *"All of a sudden, that empty van is income-producing, and the gas isn't a cost anymore. We just made money off that trip. It's things that, if we weren't focused on how to save every penny, would just not have happened.*
>
> **— Dani Ruhf, Founder & CEO, CHOP Out Hunger**

The quarterly board report changed how the board engages. Board members who hadn't typically given at significant levels now make large recurring monthly gifts, because board giving was one of the plan's metrics. After a grant-funded first year, CHOP Out Hunger chose to invest in a second.

> *"Every time I send out the board report, they see where we are, they see where the gaps are. They understand our performance and they ask all the right questions: Who can I talk to? What do you need from me? How can I support this piece? It was nice that they could see where they fit into the puzzle more."*
>
> **— Dani Ruhf, Founder & CEO, CHOP Out Hunger**

Ready to run your strategic plan, not just write it?

Learn more at: stratsimple.com

StratSimple