

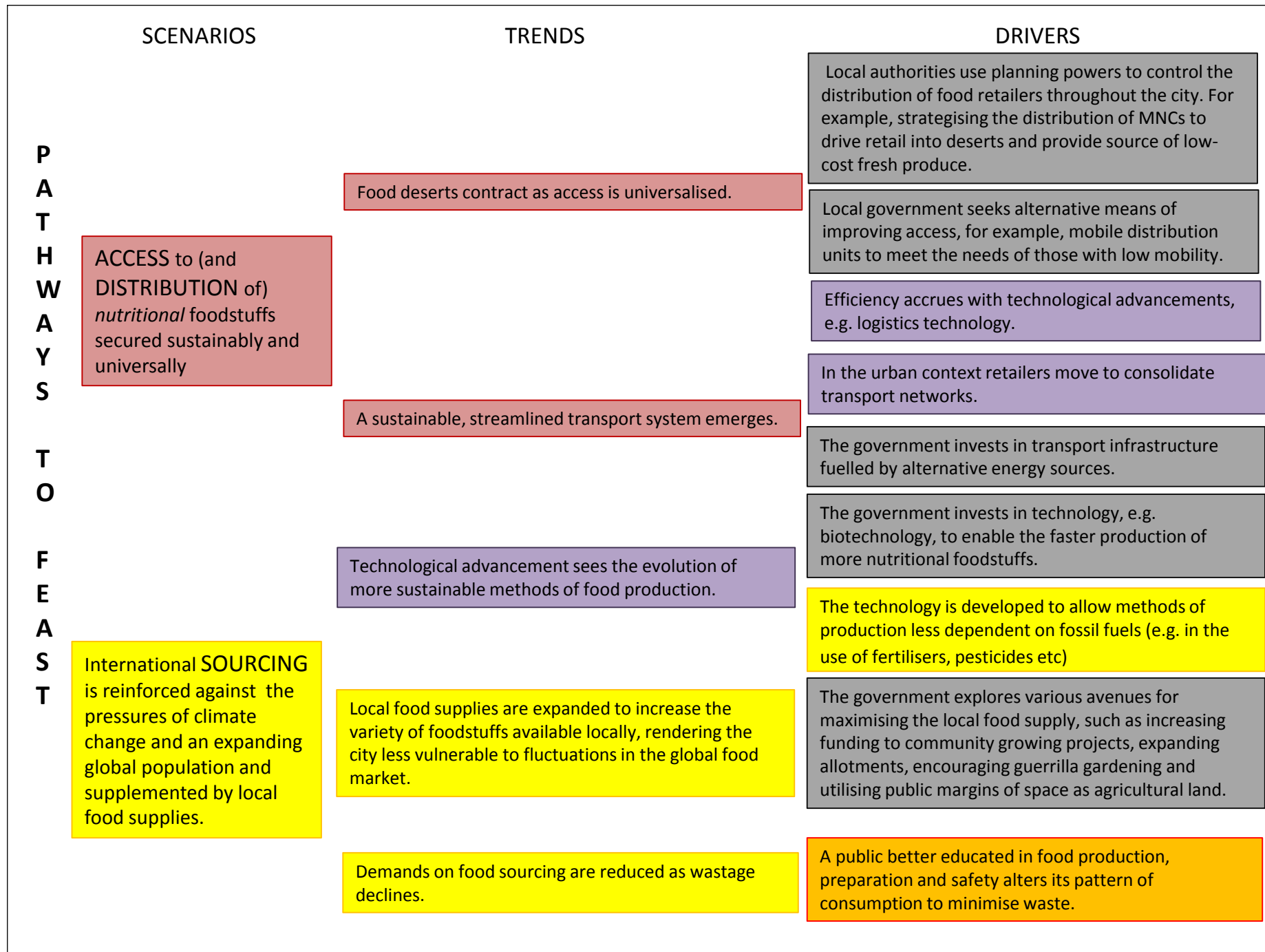


the new
optimistsforum

PATHWAYS TO FEAST

content analysis of the forum on
9th February 2012
PART TWO

ELLIE RICHARDS
MARCH 2012



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(Nutritional) **FOOD POVERTY** declines as individuals are given the means and the resources to maintain healthier diets.

Individuals adopt healthier diets, increasing consumption of nutritionally beneficial foodstuffs.

Universal access to nutritional foodstuffs.

Impact of governmental 'nudge' policies in altering consumption; e.g. tax on unhealthy food stuffs, introduction of food credits, use of planning powers to limit access to fast-food etc.

Individuals increase investment in food and food preparation.

Role of education in re-skilling population and encouraging broader re-engagement with food.

A cohesive **SOCIETY** develops in which food is a valuable resource serving to unite the community.

Negative stereotypes surrounding an interest in 'good food' dissolve.

An increase in the perceived value of food under conditions of scarcity and concomitant reigniting of public interest.

Food regains its social significance.

Emphasis in education on the social as opposed to functional aspect of food.

The extension of community growing projects and their increased importance as a means of social interaction (in the context of growing unemployment).

A shift away from expectations of excess occurring under conditions of scarcity.

Education of public in food safety .

EDUCATION emerges as a vehicle for broader **BEHAVIOURAL** change.

Patterns of waste and over-consumption reverse.

Society's re-engagement with food.

Success of government in opening dialogue with the public for their inclusion in the development of local policy responses to food issues.

Healthier and more environmentally conscious behaviour adopted by the public.

The mainstreaming of food production and food preparation techniques in education.

Power of legislation to reform risk-averse culture

Role of community growing projects in developing technical expertise.

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GOVERNMENT plays central role in influencing individual behaviour and altering the context in which the individual acts.

Government capable of influencing individual behaviour and encouraging broader social change.

Government capable of altering broader structural factors.

Ability to 'create consequences' to which individuals will respond.

Open data and the inclusion of the public in policy making processes (introducing the aspect of personal responsibility).

Effectiveness of 'nudge' policies.

Availability of data to inform appropriate policy responses e.g. market data as alternative form of planning gain.

Public receptiveness to structural change.

Ability to resist pressures of vested market interests.

On 9th February 2012, six people met over dinner supplied by the CIC *Change Kitchen* at Woodbourne in Birmingham.

They came to discuss a topic that had arisen at the New Optimists Forum event on 2nd November, namely food deserts and poverty in Birmingham.

The conversation was facilitated by **Norman Leet**, and there was live social media reporting by **Steph Jennings**. The conversation was also recorded and transcribed. The transcription, along with the social media reporting, was analysed by **Ellie Richards**, with the guidance of **Professor Frances O'Brien** of Warwick Business School.

This document *Pathways to Feast* is one half of Ellie's analysis. The other half, *Pathways to Famine* is also published as a pdf (search 'pathways to famine' at <http://newoptimists.com>).

The six participants in this round-table discussion were:

Dr Lucy Bastin from Aston University. With a first degree in zoology, and her PhD in the population ecology of urban plants, she now applies spatial analysis techniques to health, environmental and socio-demographic research challenges.

Jayne Bradley opens the first city food park in Birmingham, *Edible Eastside* this spring. She was also one of the team to bid successfully for the redevelopment of Harborne's Clock Tower; they're committed to transform it into a food hub with a dedicated community school of artisan cookery — she's the person developing the new CIC, called *Kitchen*, which will open in March 2013.

Nick Booth is the founder of Podnosh, the social media consultancy whose aim is "to change the way the public and the public sector talk to each other".

Kate Cooper is the founder of the New Optimists Forum and the Linus Publishing Company, the latter initially set up to publish the book *The New Optimists: Scientists View Tomorrow's World and What It Means to Us* to which over 80 regional scientists contributed. She's also CEO of Science Forward Ltd, the not-for-profit company which owns Linus Publishing and the New Optimists brand.

Parveen Mehta is the Operations Director of Minor Weir & Willis, a fruit and vegetable importer and distributor to the major supermarkets, based in Perry Barr in Birmingham. MMW is also increasingly a grower of supplies.

Jim Parle, Professor of Primary Care at Birmingham Medical School, also allotment holder and father of two professional chefs. It was his video interview at the November Forum event that sparked the recent wide debate on food poverty issues in the city.

Sandy Taylor is Head of Sustainability at Birmingham City Council.



We are grateful to the following organisations for their support of the New Optimists Forum:

