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und Außenpolitik

Lasse Scherbarth

**Security Cooperations in the context of
Feminist Foreign Policy
Perspectives on the German Approach in
West Africa**



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Universität zu Köln, Aachener Straße 75, 50931 Köln

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Abstract

This research examines the implications of Germany's new Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) on security cooperation with West African nations. The FFP has guided the foreign policy of the current German government since it took office in 2021. Using the representative example of German security cooperation with Ghana, this study explores the extent to which the new approach is suited to addressing longstanding issues of collaboration while simultaneously managing the challenges of increasing geopolitical tensions. To this aim, the morphological analysis is applied, a structured approach to scenario analysis that categorizes potential outcomes of highly influential components based on their variable interaction. This results in four scenarios, which provide an overview of possible developments. As a conclusion from these scenarios, it can be inferred that FFP has the potential to improve security cooperation with West African nations, although the impact of such improvements is difficult to assess due to the high complexity involved in ensuring regional security. The analysis further suggests that Germany's FFP, despite its transformative potential, represents only one among numerous factors influencing regional outcomes, particularly in the context of West Africa, where terrorism and instability are influenced by both local and global actors.

Keywords: Feminist Foreign Policy, Security Cooperation, West Africa, Ghana, Germany, Scenario Analysis

Lasse Scherbarth completed his Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences with a focus on Political Science (B.Sc.) at the University of Cologne and is now studying for a Master's in International Relations (M.Sc.) at Aalborg University.

Contact: lasse.scherbarth@gmail.com

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List of Abbreviations

ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FFP	Feminist Foreign Policy
IR	International Relations
NSS	National Security Strategy
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States of America
PRC	People's Republic of China

Security Cooperations in the context of Feminist Foreign Policy: Perspectives on the German Approach in West Africa

1 Introduction

Germany's foreign policy is currently undergoing a period of transformation and reorientation. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has caused a disruption to the general sense of security, prompting Germany to reassess its own defense capabilities. The intensification of tensions with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and several coups in West Africa are just two additional examples that demonstrate the rapidly changing landscape of international politics. These significant developments occurred during a period in which the current German government, consisting of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, Alliance 90/The Greens, and the Free Democratic Party, was in the process of reshaping the German foreign policy. The aim of this process was to establish feminist principles as guiding lines for Germany's foreign policy. The result of this endeavor was the presentation of a comprehensive framework for Germany's interpretation of Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) in February 2023. This framework was intended to shape Germany's foreign policy actions from that point onwards. The expectations for this reorientation are as high among supporters as the criticism among the opposition in the Bundestag. In light of these developments, the question of what a German interpretation of feminist foreign policy might look like, how it will be implemented in practice, and whether this strategy will be successful in overcoming the problems of the past,

arises. In particular, with regard to cooperation with countries on the African continent, both partner states (Falashadé 2024: 8) and scholars (Haastrup 2023) are hoping for improvements. The presentation of a new Africa strategy by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (2023a) also suggests a willingness for change on the part of the new government. Analogous to developments in the rest of the world, the relationships between Germany and its African partner states have undergone constant and increasingly rapid changes over the past decade (Haastrup 2023). It is yet to be seen whether Germany will successfully address criticism regarding its cooperation with African nations through the implementation of this novel foreign policy approach.

The present study seeks to address the aforementioned question and to examine the potential of FFP. This research focuses on Germany's security cooperation in West Africa. The numerous coups that have occurred in recent years in the Sahel region (Soulé 2024: 7) and the growing strength of jihadist groups active in this area (Soulé 2024: 1) have resulted in particular security challenges for neighboring countries. In light of these substantial challenges, there is an urgent need for international security agreements in these states (Soulé 2024: 5). On the German side, it is evident that the new government is following recent trends and paying increasing attention to countries on the African continent (Haastrup 2023; Hackenesch/Lacher 2024: 2-3). In this context, this study aims to address the following question: To what extent is Germany's FFP approach an adequate response to the challenges of security cooperation in West Africa?

This question will be answered through an analysis of Germany's security cooperation with Ghana, a nation that stands as Germany's foremost partner in the region (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2024). The relevance of this topic is underscored by the extensive access to data and publications, ensuring comprehensive insights. Despite the variances in the current security landscape of the coastal states of the Gulf of Guinea differs, these countries

face similar challenges (Falashadé 2024: 1). In this context, an exemplary analysis of one country to draw conclusions for the region is justified.

The structure of this research project is as follows: The first step will present the current state of research regarding Germany's FFP and the security situation of West Africa's coastal states. This will be followed by an explanation of the German interpretation of FFP, along with the key concept of Human Security, providing the theoretical basis for the investigation. Afterward, the methodology, which is primarily based on the morphological analysis, will be explained. In the following main part, the analysis results will be presented and discussed in the concluding chapter.

2 State of Research

The literature review is the starting point for this investigation. The analysis of the current research focuses on two areas. Firstly, it examines current research on FFP in general and Germany's specific interpretation of this approach. Secondly, it examines how research views the current security situation in West African coastal states and the implications this holds for security cooperation with countries such as Germany. The insights gained from this review will be crucial to the analysis that follows.

Research on FFP can be divided into two main areas. The first considers FFP from a normative perspective, largely rooted in general feminist theory. In contrast, the second strand of research analyzes FFP based on empirical findings from countries that have been implementing FFP for several years (Achilleos-Sarl/Thomson 2023: 3). Since this study is not guided by a normative approach and is primarily based on empirical data, most of the literature used will come from this second category. In general, this empirically driven research on FFP is still a young

research field. Sweden, the first country to implement feminist principles in its foreign policy, developed the concept in 2014. The knowledge gained from Sweden's FFP over the following years have served as the foundation for empirical analyses of the policy. Many other empirical analyses of FFP are based on the foreign policy of Canada (Government of Canada 2017), which was the second country to adopt the concept (Achilleos-Sarl/Thomson 2023: 3). While much of the empirical analysis focuses on these two countries, the full assessment of their foreign policies is far from complete. For instance, the first evaluation of Sweden's FFP has only recently been presented (Expertgruppen För Biståndsanalys 2023).

As the German government has only recently adopted the FFP approach, empirical results are not yet available (Pierobon 2023: 286). Thus, the study relies on literature that analyzes the foreign policy outcomes of countries like Sweden and Canada, which, as mentioned, have been applying the concept for several years. Much of the literature used to explain Germany's FFP builds on the empirical findings from this research strand and derives implications for the implementation of the approach in Germany. Publications on Germany's FFP have also been heavily influenced by the participatory approach taken by the German government in defining its FFP. In this process, not only the opinions of civil society were gathered, but also various perspectives from scholars were taken into account, shaping the interpretation of Germany's FFP (Pierobon 2023: 296). A notable example is the "Call for Papers" (German Federal Foreign Office 2023c), which invited scholars to contribute to shaping Germany's FFP. In addition, the outbreak of the war in Ukraine has served as the basis for several publications that reflect on FFP in the context of heightened security threats (e.g. Pierobon 2023; Hackenesch/Lacher 2024). The current research on the security situation in West African coastal states has been heavily influenced by the coups in the Sahel region in recent years. The coups in Mali (2020), Burkina Faso (2022), and Niger (2023) have not only increased the security threat to West African coastal states, but have also created new challenges

for Germany and other countries regarding their security cooperation in West Africa (Tull 2024a: 1). When this aspect is combined with the new foreign policy, it becomes clear that this research is confronted with many new developments and is therefore highly dependent on current literature.

Despite these significant changes, it is still possible to draw on literature that analyzes Germany's past security activities in West Africa. While the circumstances of cooperation in the Sahel have changed dramatically, the reasons behind Germany's engagement in this region remain the same (Tull 2024a: 5). In contrast, the security situation in the West African coastal states that are the focus of this study has not changed drastically, but the future challenges have (Ehlert/Schaefer-Kehnert 2023: 1). Given this context, the primary task is to integrate the literature on the current developments in West Africa with analyses of Germany's security cooperation with the West African coastal states.

3 Theory of FFP

The theoretical framework of this work is provided by the German interpretation of FFP and the central aspect of Human Security within this approach. In a first step, the historical developments of FFP will be outlined, as it has a significant influence on the German variant and thus forms the basis the explanation of the German approach. The same method will be used to explain the concept of Human Security. After explaining where this new understanding of security originated, it will be demonstrated how Human Security fits into the German approach to FFP. Finally, hypotheses will be derived from this theoretical framework, which will later be confirmed or refuted by the analysis results.

3.1 History of FFP

Although the foundations of FFP can be traced back to decades of development (Thompson/Ahmed/Khokar 2021: 2), Sweden's approach is considered as the starting point for the creation and definition of FFP (Thompson/Asgith 2018). In 2014, under the former Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström, FFP was first declared as a guideline for the country's foreign policy actions (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014). Over the following years, it became clear that more and more countries were adapting the concept to the Swedish model. Initially, this approach was considered applicable only to the Global North (Thomson/Färber 2023: 4), first adopted by countries like Canada or France, but in recent years, countries in South America and Africa, including Mexico, Liberia, and Colombia, have joined this development (Thomson/Färber 2023: 4). The significance of Sweden's initiative is particularly relevant because Sweden set the standards for FFP that other countries, which have since adapted the concept, followed and continue to follow (Thompson/Asight 2018). Since the German approach shows great similarities to Sweden's original version (Dinkel/Schirwon/Stamm 2022: 4), a closer examination of this foreign policy is necessary to understand the German approach. Particular attention will be paid to the aspects that shaped the German interpretation. The declaration of the FFP in Sweden was preceded by a decades-long governmental agenda that raised awareness of feminist issues and paved the way for Sweden to take this step (Achilleos-Sarl/Thomson 2023: 3). At the core of the Swedish concept is the 3R-approach, consisting of the components Rights, Representation, and Resources. These terms describe the three aspects of Swedish foreign policy that receive special focus: strengthening women's rights, representing women, and providing the necessary resources (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014: 11-15). In addition to foreign policy objectives, the Swedish approach also articulates far-reaching implications for internal and domestic processes and

analyzes their significance for the successful implementation of FFP (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014: 30-49).

This brief overview of the FFP stands out because it was the first approach that managed to comprehensively and holistically shape foreign policy through a feminist lens. Previous initiatives were only able to implement feminist goals in specific areas (Thompson/Ahmed/Khokar 2021: 2). This is one of the main reasons why many other countries have followed this idea of foreign policy and still look strongly to Sweden's original model (Thompson/Ahmed/Khokar 2021: 2). Despite all the positive resonance to Sweden's initiative, certain aspects have been criticized. In particular, the focus on the binary gender system and the lack of inclusion of other marginalized groups were criticized. Furthermore, the Swedish government was heavily criticized for its ongoing arms deliveries to Saudi Arabia, highlighting a significant gap between theory and practice (Thompson/Ahmed/Khokar 2021: 3).

3.2 The German Approach to FFP

As one of the most recent countries to adopt the FFP concept, the German government, through the current Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, declared FFP to be the guiding principle of Germany's foreign policy in 2023 (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a). These developments took place under special circumstances due to Russia's war against Ukraine. Following the proclamation of the "Zeitenwende" by the current Chancellor Olaf Scholz (German Federal Government 2022), a feminist development policy was also declared simultaneously (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development 2023b), and a National Security Strategy (NSS) was drafted (German Federal Foreign Office 2023b).

Before explaining the concept of Germany's FFP, it is important to note, as outlined in the previous chapter, that the dichotomous division of approaches in

research into normative and empirical perspectives (Achilleos-Sarl/Thomson 2023: 3), means that there are also two different positions on FFP in the political realm. Among proponents of FFP, a distinction is made between a normative and a pragmatic faction. In addition, there is a group of political conservatives who are skeptical of the idea of FFP (Dinkel/Schirwon/Stamm 2022: 4). The current government is aligned with the pragmatic faction (Dinkel/Schirwon/Stamm 2022: 4). Therefore, this research will focus on the views of the pragmatic faction within the government's FFP.

Following the Swedish model, the German FFP is also based on the components of Rights, Representation, and Resources. The Rights component aims to ensure the protection of human rights, especially for women and other marginalized groups. These groups should also be better represented and involved in decision-making processes on peace and security issues. The necessary resources should also be directed more towards these groups. Due to criticism of Sweden's lack of gender-sensitive considerations, the overarching aspect of Diversity has been included. Therefore, the German approach is referred to as the "3R plus D" approach (Dinkel/Schirwon/Stamm 2022: 4).

The areas to be addressed by the FFP are identified on the basis of ten guidelines (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 16-18). The first guideline, "Peace and Security Policy," will be examined in detail in order to better understand the theoretical background from which the current German government operates in the area of security cooperation and, where mentioned, projects on the African continent will be considered. Building on the United Nations' (UN) "Women, Peace, and Security" agenda and the UN Security Council's Resolution 1325 (United Nations Security Council 2000), this guideline is based on the assumption that communities are more conflict-resistant and peaceful when women participate fully in political processes (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 20). This guideline focuses on three overarching goals. The first goal aligns with the Rights component

and aims to strengthen the participation of women and other marginalized groups in peace processes. One selected project for the African continent is to support the African Union in creating a network of women mediators to strengthen the peace and security architecture (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 22). The second goal addresses the issue of sexual and gender-based violence in conflicts and calls for supporting survivors of these crimes and holding perpetrators accountable (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 24). One project being carried out on the African continent in this context is the leadership of an international team within the UN mission "United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan". This project supports the Sudanese authorities in their efforts to combat sexual violence (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 25). The final aspect focuses on supporting gender-sensitive approaches in the field of arms control. This includes the promotion of women's participation, humanitarian arms control, and advocacy for a world without nuclear weapons (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 27).

As in the Swedish model, the implementation of feminist principles in internal working processes is also given high priority. Four of the ten guidelines are dedicated to the internal workings of the Foreign Service (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 58-71). A participatory approach was also followed in developing the new foreign policy strategy, which promoted the representation of the positions of academia and civil society through various events (Pierobon 2023: 296-297). In particular, the 2022 "Call for Papers" (German Federal Foreign Office 2023c) expressed interest in academic publications and thus supported academic engagement with FFP.

Although the described conceptualization of Germany's FFP has been established as comprehensively as in Sweden, it remains to be seen how this approach will be implemented in practice. As the outlined strategy was only introduced in March 2023, there is no empirical data to measure the impact of

Germany's new foreign policy (Pierobon 2023: 286). In this context, it remains to be seen how successfully the feminist guidelines clarified in theory will be translated into feminist processes (Hauschild/Stamm 2024).

3.3 The concept *Human Security*

The presentation of the "3R plus D" approach has already provided some indicators that could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of FFP. However, since this research project aims to analyze security cooperation, the concept of security to which the German FFP is oriented serves as a more appropriate indicator. This concept of security is the aforementioned Human Security, which is closely related to FFP (Smith/Ajadi 2020: 367) and focuses on the security of individuals. After a brief presentation of the origin of this concept, it will be explained how this approach fits into the German FFP strategy. Since the German strategy paper provides an imprecise portrayal of Human Security, the definitions from the 1994 Human Development Report will be used instead to understand the concept.

3.3.1 The Origin of *Human Security* and its Implementation in the German Approach

Traditionally, the concept of security in foreign policy has been defined in terms of the security of a state and its territory. Towards the end of the 20th century, several new security concepts emerged (Paris 2001: 87). These were made possible by the end of the Cold War, which allowed conventional notions of security to be challenged (Tadjbakhsh/Chenoy 2007: 10). Among these new concepts was Human Security, which shifted the focus of security concerns in foreign policy to individuals. This development was triggered by the annual Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report from 1994 criticized the prevailing concept of security and argued that the everyday security needs of people should be central to political security decisions (United

Nations Development Programme 1994: 22). Initially, the UNDP's initiative had only a short-term impact, as the issue lost relevance in the years immediately following. Between 2001 and 2005, however, Human Security re-emerged as a focus of international security discussions due to the involvement of individual countries and newly emerging security needs (Tadjbakhsh/Chenoy 2007: 10-11). From the beginning, the definition of Human Security posed a challenge that persists to this day. The term has been used as an overarching theory, a specific area for security-related research, a framework for political action, and more (Tadjbakhsh/Chenoy 2007: 5). Roland Paris (2001) identifies the root of the problem: the term is too broadly defined. According to Sartori's concept of "conceptual stretching" (Sartori 1970: 64), a term that covers everything ends up meaning nothing (Paris 2001: 93). The German conceptualization of FFP also remains vague in this regard. The strategy states that the concept of Human Security has already been implemented in international negotiations (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 2) and is now a focus of Germany's foreign policy (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 13). In terms of peace and security policy, the focus is on the protection of civilians, especially vulnerable groups (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 27). However, a specific explanation of the concept is lacking. Since, as explained above, research on Germany's FFP focuses on the general theoretical orientation and the opportunities of the new foreign policy, current publications do not provide a detailed breakdown of the concept, but instead focus on how Human Security can be meaningfully integrated into Germany's FFP (e.g. Dinkel/Schirwon/Stamm 2022: 6).

3.3.2 *Human Security* according to the United Nations Development Programme

In order to derive hypotheses and conduct subsequent analysis, this research project requires a detailed description of the concept of Human Security. The original approach of the UNDP has been selected for this purpose. This is because it is seen

as the central starting point for the concept (Tadjbakhsh/Chenoy 2007: 10), and much of the relevant research on the topic is based on this definition (Paris 2001: 91). Since the German strategy paper on FFP does not narrow down the concept, a broad understanding of Human Security must be chosen to avoid leaving out relevant elements. This can be achieved by using the UNDP approach, which is briefly outlined below. The UNDP's concept of Human Security is based on two key assumptions. The first is that security is not limited to the territorial safety of a state but rather encompasses the broader security of individual people (United Nations Development Programme 1994: 3). The second assumption addresses how security should be created. The goal is to ensure that sustainable human development, rather than militarization and armament, becomes the guarantor of peace (United Nations Development Programme 1994: 24). Based on these assumptions, the UNDP defines seven dimensions of Human Security (United Nations Development Programme 1994: 24-25). A brief overview of these seven categories is sufficient to gain a basic understanding of the broad scope of Human Security.

To ensure Economic Security, people must be able to earn a secure basic income. Food Security is achieved when both physical and economic access to basic nutrition is guaranteed. Health Security refers to the ongoing process of preventing disease and death. Threats to Environmental Security are described as the local consequences of changes to ecosystems, which are largely due to human behavior and must be addressed. Personal Security is defined as protection from violence. Community Security refers to safety from violence by one's own or another community. Finally, Political Security encompasses the protection of human rights (United Nations Development Programme 1994: 25-33).

3.4 Hypothesis Derivation

Based on the theory presented, three hypotheses were formulated, which will be tested in the analysis. In line with the research question and the insights gained from the literature review, Germany's foreign policy will be examined in the context of security cooperation with West African coastal states and their protection against the spread of terrorism. The underlying theory differentiates between feminist foreign policy and the concept of *Human Security*. Accordingly, the formulated hypotheses are as follows:

Table 1: Formulated hypotheses

H1	Germany's feminist foreign policy leads to a improved cooperation with West African states in the security sector. Die feministische Außenpolitik Deutschlands führt zu einer verbesserten Zusammenarbeit mit westafrikanischen Staaten im Sicherheitssektor
H2	Germany's feminist foreign policy strengthens the security of West African coastal states against the spread of terrorism.
H3	The application of the concept <i>Human Security</i> by Germany strengthens the security of West African coastal states against the spread of terrorism.

Source: Own illustration.

4 Methodology

The methodology used to test the hypotheses and answer the research question answered is known as morphological analysis. As part of the broader category of scenario development, it aims to create various plausible scenarios and draw conclusions about the subject of interest based on them. Since this methodology does not belong to the traditional methods of International Relations (IR)

(Janusch/Behrens/Henning 2024), the first subchapter will explain the methodological branch to which morphological analysis belongs and why this approach was chosen for this research project. The second and crucial part presents morphological analysis as a concrete method and explains where and how the methodology is adapted to suit this research project. This is done by breaking down the clearly structured four steps of the method.

4.1 Scenarioanalysis im International Relations

To understand why morphological analysis was chosen as the method, it is helpful to consider the origins of this approach. Morphological analysis is part of a broad methodology known as Foresight, which aims to design future scenarios in a specific way (Sus/Hadeed 2020: 436). The explanation can be reduced to the literal translation, which defines Foresight as the ability to correctly assess what will happen and to plan one's actions accordingly (Cambridge Dictionary 2024). Foresight is used in a wide variety of research disciplines, with the following explanations referring to its application in the field of IR. There are several ways to further categorize Foresight (Sus/Hadeed 2020: 437). The distinction used here differentiates between approaches that create desirable, possible, or plausible forms of the future (Wilkinson 2017: 13). Since answering the research question would neither benefit from a normative assessment of FFP nor from an exploration of all possible futures, scenario analysis was chosen, focusing on creating plausible scenarios (Sus/Hadeed 2020: 437). This is one of the most commonly used Foresight methods in IR (Junio/Mahnken 2013: 378).

While scenario analysis is not one of the most commonly used qualitative methods in IR (Janusch/Behrens/Henning 2024), there are strong arguments for its increased use. The starting point of this argument is often the observation that the usual theories and methods in IR are often unable to accurately predict future events (Sus/Hadeed: 434). This assumption is well-documented (Tomé/Açıklalın 2019: 4)

and leads to the conclusion that solutions must be sought for these shortcomings (Sus/Hadeed 2020: 434). Scenario analysis seeks to fill this gap by employing standardized scientific methods rather than speculative guesses (Junio/Mahnken 2013: 374). In the current IR literature, scenario analysis is primarily used in two main areas. The first is scenarios created for conflict-specific contexts, which remains the largest and most important branch of scenario analysis (Junio/Mahnken 2013: 377-378). This is due to the fact that scenario analysis was developed after World War II for war-related purposes (Mietzner/Reger 2005: 221). In recent decades, however, other areas of application have emerged, including the creation of scenarios to measure the impact of major foreign policy decisions. This is where this research project fits in, albeit with the significant distinction that it focuses on a relatively specific topic, which is unusual in this field (Junio/Mahnken 2013: 378). The next chapter will explain how morphological analysis addresses these challenges.

Scenario analysis has proven to be a suitable method for this research project because it addresses many of the problems described that apply to the research subject. First, the subject of analysis, Germany's FFP, like FFP in general, is a very young doctrine that has only been minimally studied so far (Pierobon 2023: 286) and thus holds many uncertainties. Additionally, the regional focus on Ghana is subject to highly dynamic processes that make it difficult to predict future developments. The coups in neighboring countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger have shown how quickly these fundamental changes can occur (Wilén 2024: 10). The substantial evidence that conflicts in West Africa are closely interlinked (Mengistu 2015: 28) suggests that these developments may impact neighboring states like Ghana (Tull 2024b: 27). Moreover, scenario analysis is well-suited to address the lack of available data. Apart from the generally restricted access to government documents and data, there are few publications and collected data on this research topic, as the FFP has only recently begun to guide Germany's foreign policy (Pierobon 2023: 286). This also explains why morphological analysis, which is just

only one of several methods of scenario analysis, was chosen. Scenario analysis methods can be further divided into three types: trend extrapolation-based techniques, systematic-formalized techniques, and creative-narrative techniques (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 44-75). Since the first two categories rely on a more extensive database than is available for this research, a creative-narrative technique was chosen. The methods within this category do not vary significantly (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 61-75). For practical reasons, morphological analysis was finally chosen, and its function and individual steps are explained in the following chapter.

4.2 Morphological Analysis

Morphological analysis was conceived in the 1950s as an analytical technique for various applications (Álvarez/Ritchey 2015: 1). Its fundamental ideas go back to the Swiss astrophysicist Fritz Zwicky, who extended the term morphology to refer to any structural interrelationship between objects of any kind (Zwicky 1969: 34). Based on this broad definition, the method can be applied to a wide range of fields (Álvarez/Ritchey 2015: 2).

Depending on the area of application, different versions of morphological analysis are used, which vary only slightly and follow the same basic principle (Álvarez/Ritchey 2015: 3-28). This research follows the version of the methodology used in a study generating multiple scenarios for the European energy system (Velte et al. 2004), which is suitable for the purposes of this project and recognized in publications on scenario analysis methodology (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 66-69). In some parts of this methodology, modifications are made to adapt it to the limited scope of this research. These adjustments are highlighted in the following explanation of the individual steps of the morphological analysis.

The first step in morphological analysis is the creation of a morphological box, from which possible scenarios can be derived. This box contains so-called

components and hypotheses, which describe the key factors and their potential developments. The second step is the identification of preferences and exclusions, which determines which hypotheses are mutually reinforcing and which are unlikely to occur together. A specially programmed software determines which scenarios are most plausible. Based on these results, the identified scenarios can be summarized and categorized. Finally, a representative scenario from each category is described in detail, explaining how the identified developments would manifest themselves in future reality (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 66-69). The four steps of the morphological analysis are explained in more detail below.

4.2.1 Identification of Components and Hypotheses

The creation of the morphological box, also referred to as the morphological space or morphological field (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 67), represents one of the two critical phases of the methodology. In this phase, a matrix is developed, consisting of so-called components and their corresponding hypotheses. Components are defined as the actors or factors that may have a significant influence on the future scenario (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 66). For each component, a minimum of two hypotheses are formulated, describing the possible developments of the respective component. Since the goal is to describe different scenarios, the various hypotheses for a component must clearly differ from each other. The number of components or hypotheses is not predetermined, and the number of hypotheses per component need not to be uniform. By adhering to these principles, the complexity of the situation can be adequately represented by the morphological box (Velte et al. 2004: 13).

This step is essential to the validity of a study that utilizes morphological analysis. Consequently, the identification of components and hypotheses frequently necessitates labor-intensive processes. This is often achieved by convening experts and reaching agreements on components and hypotheses through iterative

processes (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 67-68). This approach is known as the Delphi method and is frequently employed in the context of morphological analysis (Velte et al. 2004: 4). However, due to the scope of this research project, this approach is not feasible. Consequently, qualitative content analysis is used instead to identify the relevant components and hypotheses. The methodology of qualitative content analysis developed by Phillip Mayring is followed in this study (Mayring 2004). In line with this methodology, relevant literature to the research project is reviewed, and information suitable for identifying components and hypotheses is extracted and summarized. As this methodological step does not constitute the primary focus of the research project and could exceed the scope of the methodological discussion, a more detailed examination of this step is omitted.

At the end of the identification phase for components and hypotheses, the morphological box exists as a matrix presenting various scenarios. The creation of a scenario entails the combination of hypotheses, with a hypothesis being selected from each component. Consequently, the totality of potential scenarios is represented by the sum of all possible combinations of these hypotheses. However, given that the goal is to develop plausible, rather than merely possible, scenarios, it is necessary to refine the model to include the aspect of plausibility. This reduction process is described in the next chapter.

4.2.2 Reduction through Exclusions and Preferences

The focus of the second step is the reduction of possible scenarios to plausible ones. This process, wherein specific combinations of hypotheses are excluded from the analysis, can be guided in two ways. First, an intuitive approach can be used, where the selection of hypotheses for a coherent scenario is determined by the intuition of the authors (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 67). Alternatively, a systematic approach can be adopted, where hypotheses are evaluated for mutual compatibility, and decisions are made regarding which scenarios are most likely based on this analysis

(Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 67). Given that the intuitive approach is subject to a greater degree of subjective judgment, the systematic approach is selected for this research and will be elaborated upon below.

The examination of mutual compatibility between hypotheses is the second essential step of the methodology and it is based on an assessment of how likely it is for two hypotheses to occur together. The identification of preferences and exclusions is a key step in determining the likelihood of the occurrence of two hypotheses in combination (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 67). It is also possible that two hypotheses may have a neutral relationship (Velte et al. 2004: 13). In total, the bilateral relationships of all hypotheses, which do not belong to the same component, are examined for this aspect (Kosow/Gaßner 2008: 67). As in the previous phase, this step is typically carried out through expert consensus. In this case, the methodology is adapted to fit the scope of this research by replacing the Delphi method with qualitative content analysis (Mayring 2004). Once preferences and exclusions are identified, the most probable scenarios must be evaluated based on this evidence. In this research, this step is carried out using a custom evaluation system specifically programmed for this purpose.

4.2.3 Evaluation, Categorization and Description of the Scenarios

The concluding two phases of the morphological analysis process, namely evaluation and categorization, as well as scenario description, are less extensive steps. The initial evaluation will be conducted using custom-built software. This step is necessary because the evaluation systems used in the example publications are not publicly accessible, and custom programming allows a more profound comprehension of the outcomes. The software was developed using the R programming language (R Core Team 2024) and the accompanying extension RStudio (RStudio Team 2024), which are both mainly used for data analysis (cf. Wickham/Çetinkaya-Rundel/Grolemund 2023). The process began by creating the

components and their associated hypotheses. Subsequently, preferences and exclusions for the relationships between the hypotheses were entered. This was done through a matrix, where the exclusion of two hypotheses was denoted by 0, a neutral relationship by 1, and a preference by 2. Concerning the formulation of scenarios, it was determined that each component should be represented by a single hypothesis. The final evaluation of the scenarios and their scores was reduced to the 20 scenarios with the highest scores. Compared to the example study (Velte et al. 2004: 14), this number of scenarios is sufficient for the subsequent categorization step.

Regarding the identification, the procedure of the example study is followed: The scenario that yielded the best result, i.e., the highest score, is identified as the first category. Based on this, the next best results are examined. However, if a result differs in more than one hypothesis from all previously considered scenarios in a given category, a new category is created. Once a result appears that differs in more than one hypothesis from all previously considered scenarios in this category, a new category is created. At the end of this step, an arbitrary number of categories exist, which may need to be reduced in relation to the description of the scenarios.

The basis for the description of the categories is the scenario with the highest score (Velte et al. 2004: 14). The description of each scenario is generally considered a relatively free process (Junio/Mahnken 2013: 378). The only standardized step in this phase of the methodology is the explanation of the hypotheses of the respective scenario. This aspect, therefore, forms the core of the description. In addition, further explanations about the scenario may be provided. These will be clearly marked as speculative extensions of the scenario, no longer supported by the methodological process. This creative step is included in the methodology to create a more accessible form of future visualization (Junio/Mahnken 2013: 378). The results obtained through this process are presented in the following chapter.

5 Analysis

This chapter presents the results of the analysis in chronological order, following the structure laid out in the methodology chapter. First, the six identified components and their associated hypotheses are introduced. Next, a breakdown shows which of the 17 hypotheses either complement or exclude one another. Based on software-supported evaluation of the likelihood of different combinations of these hypotheses, a consolidation of potential developments into four scenarios is conducted in the following step. The final step describes the consolidated scenarios, creating a coherent and accessible overview of the results.

5.1 Components and their Hypotheses

The following description of the components and respective hypotheses is organized as follows: a tabular summary is provided first, listing each component and briefly describing the related hypotheses. In the subsequent explanation, each component is presented as a relevant factor for future developments of the research topic, with the rationale for the formulation of each hypothesis clarified.

The analysis of the components begins by focusing on Germany, where two key components were identified as critical to security sector cooperation with Ghana. The first component concerns the implementation of Germany's FFP (see Table 2). This component addresses the core challenge of how successfully this FFP concept can be integrated into the established processes and frameworks of German foreign policy. The relevance of this component stems from the widely recognized challenges associated with implementing such initiatives (Pressman/Wildavsky 1984: 15).

The two hypotheses were developed in light of Germany's concurrent formulation of a NSS and its implications for balancing *State Security* with *Human*

Security (Dinkel/Schirwon/Stamm 2022: 7). Hypothesis A.1 describes a scenario in which the NSS, particularly with its dominant focus on *State Security*, decisively shapes German foreign policy. The expectation of such an outcome is based, firstly, on the public's heightened fear of conflict involving Germany due to the war in Ukraine (Statista 2024a), which gives security concerns greater importance.

Table 2: Component A and its hypotheses

Component A: Implementation of the German FFP	
A.1	In the context of the Ukraine war and escalating power struggles on the international scene, Germany is unable to implement FFP as a guiding principle. Concerns over national security take precedence. The NSS becomes the dominant concept for German foreign policy.
A.2	The German government manages to develop an understanding of how a feminist framework can be implemented in a time fraught with crises. By adapting the concept to focus on short-term measures, the long-term goals of <i>Human Security</i> are not overlooked. The NSS and the conceptualization of FFP complement each other.

Source: Own illustration.

Additionally, it considers the challenges Germany is likely to face in the international arena in the coming years (Mair 2022). Other threats, such as the use of economic power to exert political pressure (Mair 2022), can be seen as indicators pointing towards increased emphasis on State Security. Hypothesis A.2, on the other hand, outlines a possibility for successfully implementing the concept of FFP. This development is based on the fact that it is clearly a goal of the German government (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a). Furthermore, there are already observations of shifts in German foreign policy since the new administration took office (Hasselbach 2023). This implementation scenario is one of several options, characterized by the following features: in response to crisis-induced challenges, the

FFP must adapt in the short term. This adjustment would allow alignment with the NSS. In this scenario, the two programs complement and reinforce each other. Thus, the long-term goals, such as those related to *Human Security*, are not lost sight of (Dinkel/Schirwan/Stamm 2023: 7-8).

The second Germany-specific component is the federal government's stance on collaboration with African countries (see Table 3). This aspect revolves around the question of which regions the German government will prioritize in the coming years. In recent years, there has been a trend toward Germany placing increasing importance on cooperation with African countries (Haastrup 2023). This trend has proven to be highly relevant to the quality of German-African relations and is, therefore, a focal point of this analysis. Hypothesis B.2 describes the continuation of the current trajectory. This is supported by the current government's approach, which maintains this focus despite other challenges, such as the Ukraine war (Hackenesch/Lacher 2024: 2-3). Given the outlined interests, this approach appears primarily motivated by the goal of restricting migration (Tull 2024b: 25), which is also reflected in the hypothesis. hypothesis B.3 describes a scenario in which Germany's actions are influenced by factors beyond mere migration concerns. These include pre-existing economic and geopolitical interests in collaboration, which are acknowledged yet not adequately supported by a comprehensive strategy from Germany (Grauvogel 2023: 2). The potential for enhancing security through strengthened cooperation with nations such as Ghana has not been adequately addressed, as evidenced by the NSS (Grauvogel 2023: 3), and is intended to be addressed in hypothesis B.3. In contrast, hypothesis B.1 envisions a scenario where the current German government breaks with the trend of recent years, showing less interest in cooperation with African countries. Although this shift has not yet occurred, there is a possibility that such external challenges could significantly impact German foreign policy (Heinemann 2014), leading to a redirection of focus.

Table 3: Component B and its hypotheses

Component B: Position of the German Government on Cooperation with African states	
B.1	Due to the increasing issues on the European continent, Germany pays less attention to collaboration with African countries. Consequently, the West African coastal states are also affected. The current government breaks with the trend of placing greater focus on the African continent.
B.2	The German government follows the trend of recent years and devotes increasing attention to collaboration with the African continent. However, the government fails to articulate additional goals for cooperation beyond the interest in limiting migration. Other interests, such as security cooperation, are insufficiently defined or neglected.
B.3	The German government follows the trend of recent years and devotes increasing attention to collaboration with the African continent. The government's agenda extends beyond the focus on migration and now includes the high economic and geopolitical significance of African countries. Additionally, Germany identifies security cooperation with the West African coastal states as a crucial factor, also in terms of its own security needs.
B.4	As a result of the Ukraine war, the aspect of security gains greater importance in Germany and, consequently, in foreign policy. Less attention is given to collaboration with African partner states; however, security cooperation becomes more significant. Germany recognizes this aspect as a mutual interest, leading to stronger cooperation in the security sector.

Source: Own illustration.

Hypothesis B.4 combines elements of B.1 and B.3. With a shift in priorities, Germany now aims to establish more security-oriented partnerships with other nations. This

assumption is justified by the announcement of a turning point in the history of Germany's foreign policy, which has heightened the relevance of security since the start of the Ukraine war (German Federal Foreign Office 2024).

The first of three components centering on Ghana in possible scenarios focuses on the country's national challenges (see Table 4). In this section, the emphasis is on the development of the two major issues currently facing the country: the economic situation, which is suffering from the negative impacts of high debt and inflation, and the security situation, impacted by an increased threat of terrorism in the northern regions (Falashadé 2024: 3). Hypothesis C.1, which describes a deterioration in the security situation, is based on a continued trend observed in recent years. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, West Africa has witnessed a significant increase in extremist and terrorist group activities (Aubyn 2021: 14). There is a concern that terrorist activities in neighboring countries could spill over into Ghana (Falashadé 2024: 3). Conversely, in this scenario, the economic situation shows improvement. This assumption is based on the expectation that the high inflation rate of recent years will begin to decrease (Statista 2024b). Hypothesis C.2 outlines an opposite future to hypothesis C.1. In this scenario, Ghana's precarious economic situation further deteriorates, while the security situation along the country's northern border becomes more manageable. It is assumed that the rapid rise in inflation in 2022 and 2023 (Statista 2024b) will not be curbed, and the country's high debt burden will continue to weigh heavily (Falashadé 2024: 3). Given that hypotheses C.3 and C.4 represent the most positive and most negative scenarios, respectively, for this component, their justification can be derived from the developments described in hypotheses C.1 and C.2. Furthermore, each hypothesis elaborates on its implications for the nation's international interests. It is assumed that significant domestic issues will receive a high priority in international negotiations. This assumption is supported by evidence from Ghana, where security

cooperation has been a significant focus of the country's foreign policy (Falashadé 2024: 8).

Table 4: Component C and its hypotheses

Component C: National Challenges of Ghana	
C.1	Ghana is unable to control the security situation along its northern border. Strengthening jihadist groups manage to bring some northern regions of the country under their control. As a result, the security factor dominates international negotiations. Meanwhile, the country's strained economic situation stabilizes.
C.2	While the security situation in the north of the country remains tense but stable, the consequences of high debt and rising inflation worsen. International cooperation aimed at countering this development therefore has a high priority.
C.3	Both the precarious economic situation and the security situation at Ghana's northern border improve. Consequently, other interests are given greater importance in international negotiations.
C.4	Both the precarious economic situation and the security situation at Ghana's northern border worsen. Both aspects are given high priority in international negotiations. As a result, Ghana becomes more vulnerable to dependency relationships.

Source: Own illustration.

The second component relating to Ghana concerns the development of regional security cooperation in West Africa (see Table 5). This component focuses on integration, particularly the extent to which all affected actors are successfully included in security policy decisions, thereby enabling coordinated actions and enhancing the effectiveness of security initiatives. The relevance of this aspect is predominantly predicted on criticisms by numerous scholars of the current

predominant practice, which is primarily grounded in bilateral agreements (Falashadé 2024: 8). Similar to the previous components and hypotheses, one hypothesis is based on the continuation of an existing trend. Specifically, this is the case with hypothesis D.2, which describes the trend of increasing fragmentation among security cooperation initiatives in West Africa. Notably, the *Accra Initiative* launched by Ghana in 2017 (Falashadé 2024: 3) stands as a counterpoint to the security architecture of ECOWAS. While ECOWAS was initially established as an economic union, it has gradually developed strong security instruments in response to regional challenges (Okon/Ojatorotu 2022: 27). The preference of individual countries for one security alliance over another has led to tensions. While Ghana and most Sahel-zone countries have shown support for the newly established Accra Initiative, countries like Nigeria, Gambia, and Senegal remain committed to retaining ECOWAS as the primary security instrument (Falashadé 2024: 7).

Table 5: Component D and its hypotheses

Component D: Regional Security Cooperations in West Africa	
D.1	The approaches to make regional security cooperation more inclusive are successful. The coastal states of West Africa and the Sahel states find a way to advance regional security cooperation jointly and in a coordinated manner. This marks the end of a phase characterized by many different bilateral agreements. Instead of numerous bilateral agreements, central security issues are addressed by a common body.
D.2	The approaches to make regional security cooperation more inclusive fail. The different views regarding central security issues cannot be overcome and lead to further fragmentation of initiatives. The activities of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and those of the proponents of the Accra Initiative are increasingly taking place separately from one another. Security agreements are increasingly being made in ignorance of other stakeholders and are decided bilaterally.

Source: Own illustration.

A further key factor affecting the development of regional security cooperation is the stance on external security actors. Diverging opinions on this issue have led to various factions, largely influenced by recent experiences. Sahel-zone countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso have adopted a critical stance toward cooperation with external partners, primarily due to past unsuccessful efforts in collaboration with France. In contrast, coastal nations such as Ghana and Benin follow a notably more moderate approach to this issue (Falashadé 2024: 8). In this context, it remains to be seen how attitudes toward collaboration with external partners will influence regional security cooperation. Hypothesis D.1, which outlines a scenario in which the differing positions are reconciled, builds on the theoretical assumption that crises and threats encourage increased cooperation among states (e.g., Saracino 2024: 2).

The third and final component relating to potential developments in Ghana involves Ghana's decisions regarding cooperation with partner countries, specifically the system rivals—the US and the PRC (Mair 2022; see Table 6). This aspect is particularly relevant given that the strategic use of dependency has become a hallmark of contemporary foreign policy (Mair 2022), especially affecting African nations (Kepe et al. 2023: 1). This component aims to simulate possible shifts in Ghana's alignment with either of these system rivals. The following hypotheses are based on the assumption that Ghana, like many other African countries, prefers to avoid alignment with any particular bloc of states (Klingebiel 2024: 30). This tendency has been previously documented and has led to intense competition among countries interested in cooperating with Ghana (Hackenesch/Lacher 2024: 5). A continuation of the current situation is described by hypothesis E.2. Hypotheses E.1 and E.3 outline a future in which Ghana pursues a significantly deeper collaboration with one of the global rivals. Given Ghana's inclination to avoid alignment with a particular state, this development would occur only if one of the major powers makes particularly advantageous offers. Since this process can

also be heavily influenced by Germany, a key partner to Ghana, especially in development cooperation (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development 2024), Germany's role is explicitly considered in the hypotheses. Hypothesis E.1, which describes increased collaboration with Western states, also assumes that Germany will address Ghana's criticism regarding security-sector cooperation, enhancing the partnership in ways that go beyond mere military support and training (Falashadé 2024: 8). This feedback centers around a desire for a more holistic approach to cooperation, which has the potential to improve both the effectiveness of Ghana's security apparatus and public trust in it (Ehlert/Schaefer-Kehnert 2023: 9). According to hypothesis E.3, if Germany were to ignore this criticism, Ghana might express dissatisfaction with the lack of results and view the offers from the PRC as increasingly appealing.

Table 6: Component E and its hypotheses

Component E: Cooperation Decisions of Ghana	
E.1	In principle, Ghana does not want to align itself with any world power; however, the US and other Western allies offer more promising proposals. In particular, cooperation with Western countries like Germany is currently convincing, as it has proven to be a more flexible partner in the realm of security cooperation than in previous years.
E.2	Ghana continues to pursue a policy of non-alignment and makes cooperation decisions on a case-by-case basis. The competition between countries that want to cooperate with Ghana continues to be vigorous.
E.3	In principle, Ghana does not want to align itself with any world power; however, the PRC overall offers more promising proposals. In addition to extensive economic cooperation, the military support from the PRC also proves to be effective. Security cooperation with Western countries like Germany fails due to insufficient consideration of Ghana's demands.

Source: Own illustration.

The sixth and final component focuses on the development of terrorism in the Gulf of Guinea states (see Table 7), with particular attention on those that, in contrast to the Sahel region, have thus far experienced a relatively limited number of terrorist attacks within their borders. These countries include Benin, Togo, Ghana, and the Ivory Coast (Falashadé 2024: 2), although important distinctions exist among them. In recent years, Benin and Togo have seen a marked increase in terrorist attacks, while the security situation in the Ivory Coast has improved, and Ghana continues to have the most stable security environment (Institute for Economics & Peace 2024). The two hypotheses developed address whether the spread of jihadist terrorism, which has been advancing through the Sahel region from Mali since 2012 (Haidara 2024: 1), can be contained at the borders. The primary hotspots for terrorism remain Nigeria, Niger, and Burkina Faso (Institute for Economics & Peace 2024), with their border regions representing central danger zones (Falashadé 2024: 2).

Table 7: Component F and its hypotheses

Component F: Spread of Terrorism in the Gulf of Guinea	
F.1	The small states located at the Gulf of Guinea are unable to curb the spread of terrorist activities. In particular, terrorist activities are spreading through Benin and the northern regions of other coastal states. There are initial terrorist attacks in the centers of the respective countries.
F.2	The small states located at the Gulf of Guinea succeed in curbing the spread of terrorist activities. While there are still isolated terrorist attacks in the northern regions of the coastal states, the situation remains stable in this tense state.

Source: Own illustration.

Hypothesis F.1 posits that these coastal countries will be unable to contain the spread of terrorist influence. This hypothesis is supported by recent events,

including isolated attacks in countries like the Ivory Coast and Togo (Falashadé 2024: 2). Additionally, several border areas within these states are vulnerable to the spread of terrorism. For instance, northern Ghana faces multiple challenges, including the presence of displaced persons from Burkina Faso (Falashadé 2024: 2) and tensions in the agricultural sector (Ahmed 2022). In contrast, hypothesis F.2 proposes that the coastal states will manage to prevent the spread of terrorist networks. This scenario is based on the evidence that terrorist groups have so far failed to establish a lasting presence, as evidenced by certain localized successes, such as Nigeria's progress in counterterrorism efforts (Institute for Economics & Peace 2022). Given the low probability of fully repelling terrorism in these countries due to limited past successes in the region (Falashadé 2024: 2), an additional hypothesis describing a complete elimination of terrorist threats could not be substantiated.

5.2 Exclusions and Preferences

The second crucial step of the method is the identification of preferences and exclusions. It should be emphasized again that this involves determining which hypotheses are likely or unlikely to occur simultaneously. The results of this methodological step are visually represented in the following illustrations. Figure 1 illustrates the identified preferences, while Figure 2 presents the identified exclusions. The graphics have been structured differently to provide the best possible overview. While the graphics differ in structure, the underlying concepts remain constant. On a horizontal level, the different hypotheses of a component are arranged. The following explanation of the analysis results, which justifies the identification of the preferences and exclusions, will be done in blocks for the relationships between two components, following the figure from top to bottom.

Figure 2: Identified Preferences

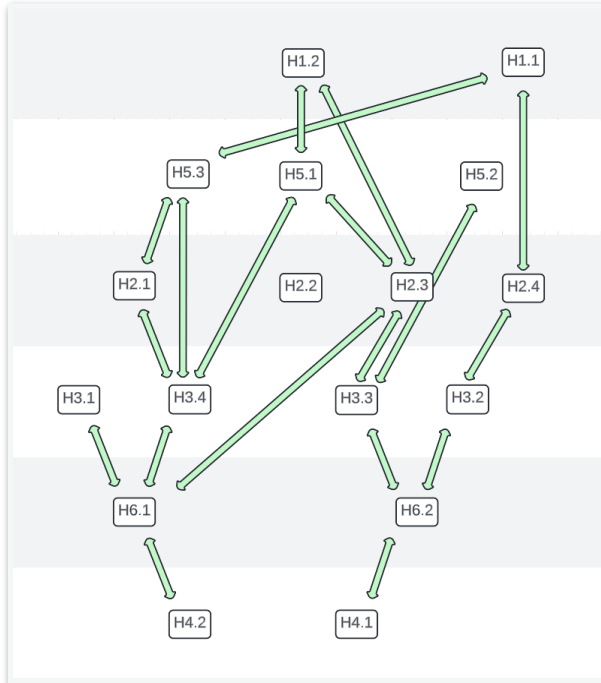
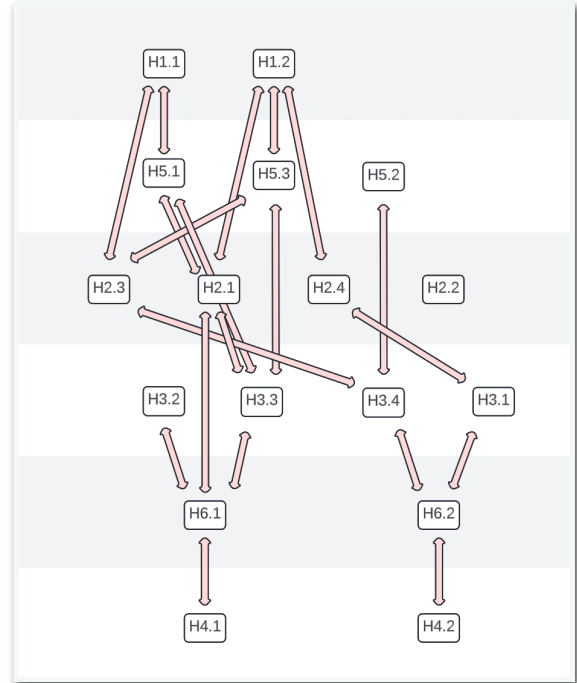


Figure 1: Identified Exclusions



Source: Own illustration.

Connections between Components A and E:

The preferences and exclusions identified under these components assume a relationship between the implementation of the FFP and a potential alignment of Ghana with one of the major powers. This assumption is based, first and foremost, on the observation that Germany is an essential partner for Ghana and can thus influence the perception of the West. Data show that Germany is a particularly important partner for Ghana in development cooperation (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development 2024). Moreover, these preferences and exclusions are based on the assumption that, from the perspective of a partner country like Ghana, FFP offers more potential than a foreign policy focused on national security. The arguments supporting this assumption should be viewed in the light of the fact that there is relatively little empirical evidence on the effects of

FFP, meaning the following arguments are theoretically grounded. The literature selected below provides a selection summarizing the central arguments.

The theoretical distinction described between *Human Security* and *State Security* suggests that the feminist approach holds more potential for people from other countries because it prioritizes individual security, regardless of nationality, rather than *State Security*. The concept of *Human Security* also promises a more appropriate and forward-looking response to crisis situations (Dinkel/Schirwon/Stamm 2022: 6). Furthermore, the successful implementation of a feminist foreign policy could have a positive impact on Germany's security cooperation with West African states, as it allows for more effective responses to current cooperation challenges (Ehlert & Schaefer-Kehnert 2023: 9). However, this can only be achieved if short-term measures in security cooperation are adapted without neglecting long-term goals (Dinkel/Schirwon/Stamm 2022: 5). One of the few empirical findings from the analysis of Swedish foreign policy also suggests that feminist foreign policy can at least partially address and dismantle postcolonial structures (Nylund/Håkansson/Bjarnegård 2023: 7).

Connections between Components A and B:

In the interplay of these components, the implications of FFP implementation for the German government's stance on cooperation with African states are examined. A positive correlation is found between the successful implementation of the FFP and a broader collaboration with African countries, extending into economic and security sectors. This preference is grounded in the potential of FFP to address postcolonial structures (Nylund/Håkansson/Bjarnegård 2023: 7), a perspective also elaborated in the German conceptualization of the approach (German Federal Foreign Office 2023a: 56). On this basis, cooperation with African states could be intensified. It has also been shown that the German government has included civil society and researchers to a greater extent in the process of creating a German FFP

(Pierobon 2023: 296-297), with the expectation that academic criticism will be given greater consideration in policymaking. This includes, for example, criticism that Germany has overlooked the importance of the African continent in its quest to ensure its own security (Grauvogel 2023), or that security sector reforms in West African coastal states have fallen short (Ehlert & Schaefer-Kehnert 2023). The second identified preference between hypothesis A.1 and B.4 assumes that Germany's increased security interest leads to greater attention toward collaboration with countries like Ghana and that security is given a higher priority. This is attributed to the significant changes in German foreign and security policy since the outbreak of the Ukraine war (Mello 2024: 11-12).

Connections between Components E and B:

The hypotheses within these components describe a link between the importance the German government places on cooperation with African states and Ghana's alignment with a great power. This identification of preferences and exclusions is based on the previous finding that German cooperation can influence how the West is perceived in Ghana. When Germany devotes more attention to collaboration with Ghana, it tends to foster Ghana's alignment with the West. Conversely, neglecting relations with Ghana tends to push Ghana closer to the PRC. The resulting opposing conclusions are represented by the exclusions between hypotheses B.1 and E.1 and between hypotheses B.3 and E.4 (see Figure 2).

Connections zwischen den Komponenten E und C:

The preferences and exclusions identified in the context of these two components assume that when Ghana facing fewer crises, it is more flexible and independent in its cooperation decisions. Conversely, it is assumed that in a crisis-ridden situation, Ghana is more likely to enter into dependent relationships and thus align itself with a major power. This assumption can be justified in several ways. Economic policy research argues that countries that are unable to develop fiscal capacity are in a

difficult position, because they cannot produce enough goods as a result (Besley/Ilzetzki/Persson 2013: 205). This situation affects not only the economic sector, but also areas like the security sector. Following this logic, countries facing additional challenges are more reliant on external assistance than other states in a more stable situation. In practical terms, Ghana is increasingly dependent on international cooperation due to growing security challenges. It has been shown that in response to the growing threat of terrorism in neighboring countries, Ghana has sought to expand security cooperation with external countries beyond training (Falashadé 2024: 8). Germany, for instance, has provided equipment, and Japan has provided financial support for the military sector (Falashadé 2024: 8).

Connections between Components B and C:

The interaction of these two components suggests that the importance Germany attaches to its cooperation with Ghana may have little impact on addressing Ghana's domestic challenges, including in the security and economic sectors. Germany's influence on Ghana's economy is based on its central role in Ghana's international cooperation. Germany is one of Ghana's most important economic partners (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development 2024) and, along with the United Kingdom and the US, is the largest provider of official development assistance among countries that are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (International Aid Transparency Aid 2024). Key focus areas of German-Ghanaian development cooperation include climate and energy, sustainable economic development, as well as peace and social cohesion (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development 2024). The latter should be viewed separately from security cooperation.

Germany does not play a central role in the security sector. The US and the PRC are the key partners in this area (Boateng/Gyamfi 2022: 2; Carrozza/Sandnes 2022: 2-3). Germany's cooperation in this area is mainly limited to capacity building,

i.e. training and equipping (Ehlert/Schaefer-Kehnert 2023: 2), which has recently been criticized by the Ghanaian government, as they seek to expand military cooperation beyond these aspects (Falashadé 2024: 8). A significant project in this field is the *Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre*, the largest initiative supported by Germany (German Federal Foreign Office 2024). Furthermore, Germany prefers to support Ghanaian initiatives like the *Accra Initiative* (Falashadé 2024: 8; Ghanaian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration 2022), as Germany considers Ghana one of its most important partners in Sub-Saharan Africa (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development 2024).

Connections between Components B and F:

The relationship between these components is simple, because it is based on a single preference, namely that between hypotheses B.3 and F.1. It is assumed that the ongoing spread of terrorism in the Gulf of Guinea will increase Germany's attention. Historically, this is based on the fact that the rise of jihadist groups in Mali prompted a rapid, albeit unsuccessful, response from several countries, including Germany (Haidara 2024: 119). The likelihood of this recurring with increasing threats to the Gulf of Guinea and Ghana in particular can further be attributed to Ghana's central partnership role with Germany and the European Union (EU) in the region (German Federal Foreign Office 2024; Falashadé 2024: 8).

Connections between Components C and F:

This section examines the influence of the spread of terrorist activities in the Gulf of Guinea on Ghana's national challenges. A positive relationship has been identified between the spread of terrorism in the region and concerns over increasing terrorist activity in Ghana.

Data on the trend of terrorist attacks in the Gulf of Guinea nations indicates a rise in terrorist incidents in recent years, with Nigeria being a notable example of

this trend. Nigeria has long been marked by high levels of terrorist activity (Institute for Economics & Peace 2024). Since the takeover of northern regions in Mali by terrorist groups in 2012, these groups have spread southward, firmly establishing themselves in Niger and Burkina Faso as of now (Institute for Economics & Peace 2024). In particular, Burkina Faso has seen extreme developments: in 2014, it reported no terrorist attacks, but by 2023, it recorded the most attacks globally (Institute for Economics & Peace 2024). In contrast, the Ivory Coast has faced sporadic attacks over the past decade (Institute for Economics & Peace 2024). Ghana, Togo, and Benin were previously considered relatively secure until recent years. However, the intense terrorism in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Nigeria has made Benin vulnerable as a transit country, leading to an increase in terrorist attacks, followed by similar incidents in Togo (Institute for Economics & Peace 2024). Despite the neighboring countries' struggles with terrorist groups, Ghana has, to date, experienced no attacks (Institute for Economics & Peace 2024; Falashadé 2024: 2).

Following these circumstances, the preferences and exclusions suggest that the heightened security threat along Ghana's borders will make security a central national challenge, even if Ghana itself continues to avoid terrorist attacks. This is already evident from recent developments (Falashadé 2024: 3).

Connections between Components F and D:

The connections between these two components are straightforward. It is assumed that improved regional cooperation among affected nations will lead to a successful fight against terrorism in West Africa. This assumption is supported by the actions of the Ghanaian government, which has identified strengthening regional partnerships as one of three key pillars in response to the rising terrorist threat to its own territory (Falashadé 2024: 3). According to Bala and Tar (2021: 188), the potential of increased regional cooperation in West Africa lies in preventing terrorist groups from extensively supporting each other. A stronger commitment and

political will among the countries concerned is necessary to develop a common security interest for the region (Bar/Tar 2021: 188). This brief explanation sufficiently justifies the outlined preferences and exclusions.

5.3 Analysis and categorization of Scenarios

The analysis and categorization of the scenarios is explained in the following table, which shows the results in a categorized format (see Table 8). This table allows us to view the 20 highest-scoring results and their classification into various scenario categories. The left column lists the scenario numbers as assigned by the software, ordered by the score shown in the right column. In total, two scenarios scored 21 points, six scenarios scored 20 points, and 14 scenarios scored 19 points.

5.4 Scenario Descriptions

The following description of each scenario category is based on its category-defining scenario. Thus, Category A is described by Scenario 1, Category B by Scenario 3, Category C by Scenario 5, and Category D by Scenario 8. To make these scenario descriptions more accessible, previously used abbreviations will be avoided.

5.4.1 Description Scenario A

The German government has successfully implemented the theoretical construct of the FFP into practice and firmly embedded it in the processes of German foreign policy. The relationship with Ghana has intensified, among other reasons, due to this approach. A common platform has been established to extend collaboration to other policy areas, thereby addressing both nations' domestic challenges.

Table 8: The most likely 20 scenarios of the analysis

Scenario category A								
1		A.2	B.3	C.1	D.2	E.1	F.1	21
2		A.2	B.3	C.4	D.2	E.1	F.1	21
9		A.2	B.3	C.1	D.1	E.1	F.1	19
10		A.2	B.3	C.4	D.1	E.1	F.1	19
11		A.2	B.3	C.2	D.2	E.1	F.1	19
12		A.2	B.3	C.3	D.2	E.1	F.1	19
13		A.2	B.2	C.4	D.2	E.1	F.1	19
14		A.2	B.3	C.1	D.2	E.2	F.1	19
15		A.2	B.3	C.3	D.2	E.2	F.1	19
Scenario category B								
3		A.1	B.1	C.4	D.2	E.3	F.1	20
4		A.1	B.4	C.4	D.2	E.3	F.1	20
16		A.1	B.2	C.4	D.2	E.3	F.1	19
20		A.1	B.1	C.4	D.1	E.3	F.2	19
Scenario category C								
5		A.2	B.3	C.2	D.1	E.1	F.2	20
6		A.2	B.3	C.3	D.1	E.1	F.2	20
7		A.2	B.3	C.3	D.1	E.2	F.2	20
15		A.2	B.3	C.3	D.2	E.2	F.1	19
Scenario category D								
8		A.1	B.4	C.2	D.1	E.3	F.2	20
17		A.1	B.4	C.2	D.1	E.2	F.2	19
18		A.1	B.4	C.3	D.1	E.2	F.2	19
19		A.1	B.1	C.2	D.1	E.3	F.2	19
20		A.1	B.1	C.4	D.1	E.3	F.2	19

Source: Own illustration.

Germany has articulated guidelines for cooperation not only on migration, but also on economic and security issues. This development has been significantly driven by Ghana, which has expressed a growing interest in security cooperation in response to an escalating security threat. Terrorist activities have intensified across the region in recent years, with nearby West African coastal states such as Togo and Benin experiencing regular attacks. Following Ghana's first terrorist incidents in the north and increased refugee flows from neighboring states, security has become Ghana's central interest in international negotiations. While Ghana seeks to leverage regional security partnerships, cooperation with other states has proven challenging. Cooperation with countries like Nigeria and Senegal faces hurdles due to differing visions for institutionalized regional security, while Mali and Burkina Faso have distinct preferences regarding partnerships beyond the region. As a result, Ghana has turned to Western countries in hopes of effective security collaboration. Germany, which has established the concept of *Human Security* as a guiding principle of its foreign policy, is proactively working to protect vulnerable groups in Ghana's northern region through various initiatives. Military cooperation has expanded, with increased supplies of military equipment and financial support now on the table. Current discussions with Ghana are even considering the deployment of German troops to the crisis region.

5.4.2 Description Scenario B

Due to multiple crises, a global trend has emerged, shifting the focus from international cooperation to national action and security. In West Africa, the spread of terrorism is affecting more states and driving humanitarian crises. Collective action among West African nations is rare, with past efforts hampered by differences and poor security results. Ghana, long considered as a key partner by Western nations, now finds its traditionally secure position in the Gulf of Guinea increasingly at risk. Alongside security concerns, Ghana faces a severe economic crisis, marked by soaring national debt and rising inflation, which further strains its

capacity to address other issues. Ghana's search for international partnerships has been drastically limited in recent years. A rise in protectionism, led mainly by Western nations, has caused many partners to turn inward. Germany, long a key economic partner, has shown diminishing interest in working with Ghana. With the Ukraine conflict intensifying security concerns, Germany has prioritized national security and cooperation with European states and Western alliances, overlooking valuable security collaboration with Ghana. Even cooperation on migration, once a core issue in Ghana-Germany relations, has been scaled back and replaced by stricter actions at the EU's external borders. As a result, Ghana, like many others in the region, has been forced to turn to China. While Ghana's goal is to remain neutral, current conditions limit this flexibility.

5.4.3 Description Scenario C

Contrary to recent trends, the West African community of states has succeeded in halting the advance of terrorism and establishing a sense of stability in the region. Given the spread of terrorism in coastal West Africa, affected states have put aside individual interests, enabling a unified approach to security. Although the threat is not fully eradicated, this development marks a promising sign for the region. Ghana, which played a pivotal role, benefits immensely, as it was one of the nations most at risk of initial terrorist attacks and can now look forward to maintaining this newfound stability. This allows Ghana to focus on other challenges, such as its economic issues. Key to this is the increased international cooperation that has resulted from the positive developments in the region. Germany has emerged as a central partner, expanding and deepening its collaboration with Ghana across various fields. Through a new foreign policy that prioritizes *Human Security*, Germany has fostered equitable partnerships, addressing both sides' needs. This shift in German foreign policy has enabled meaningful security support, helping Germany assume a leading role in West Africa. Prioritizing individual protection, especially for vulnerable groups, has also drawn other Western partners into

alignment, maximizing Ghana's security benefits. Germany is expected to remain a key partner for Ghana as it faces economic challenges.

5.4.4 Description Scenario D

At a crucial stage in the formulation of German foreign policy, a shift towards the prioritization of *State Security* has emerged. The development of Germany's first NSS has become the central document outlining its foreign policy principles. Consequently, collaboration with many long-standing partners has focused on the security sector within a relatively short period of time. In nations like Ghana, which have welcomed this shift in German foreign policy, the transition has been rapid. Though the cooperation has not intensified, a promising framework has been developed that allows Ghana to better express its security concerns. Along with successful regional security developments in West Africa, Ghana has managed to halt the expansion of terrorist groups and protect its territory from attacks. Neighboring countries, such as Togo and Burkina Faso, continue to face attacks, although the situation has stabilized. Future prospects are hopeful, as West African states have successfully institutionalized a unified network for combating terrorism. Additionally, collaboration with the PRC has brought positive security cooperation to West African nations, and Ghana has cautiously welcomed the PRC as a partner. However western states like Germany have gradually deprioritized West Africa following the Ukraine conflict, allowing the PRC to gain Ghana's attention. Considering Ghana's economic challenges, it seems likely that it will increasingly favor cooperation with the PRC. It remains to be seen whether countries like Germany, which hold geopolitical interests in working with states in the region, can re-establish themselves as key partners.

6 Conclusion and Discussion

This final section first examines the results in relation to the established hypotheses, followed by a discussion of selected significant aspects of the study. Regarding the hypotheses to be tested, none can be definitively accepted, as each was formulated to imply a clear relationship between two variables. However, the scenario analysis results cannot make a precise statement about these variable relationships because the methodology's outcomes refer to future events. Nevertheless, insights can be gleaned about the topics highlighted by the hypotheses. These insights are presented below in a condensed summary of the findings.

The scenario descriptions suggest that implementing FFP in German foreign policy may positively impact on cooperation with West African nations like Ghana. However, it is important to note that the literature published after Germany's declaration of FFP has tended to favor the FFP concept and mainly addresses what feminist foreign policy should look like. Much of this discussion is theoretical, and practical implementation may face real-world challenges. Although hypothesis 1 seems well-supported, it remains to be seen how effectively the FFP will be implemented and how it will manifest itself in practice. A similar yet distinctly different picture emerges with hypotheses 2 and 3. These hypotheses are supported by the notion that adopting FFP and *Human Security* can strengthen collaboration with Ghana and better address the challenges of spreading terrorism. As with hypothesis 1, the effectiveness of a feminist approach as a viable foreign policy to counter terrorism remains to be proven in practice. Furthermore, the various scenarios show that containing terrorism in the region is influenced by numerous other factors. The findings indicate that while Germany has a valued position as a key partner for Ghana, regional security events are shaped by a multitude of factors, referred to in this analysis as components, that develop independently of German involvement.

This aspect leads to the methodological discussion of this conclusion. During the methodology explanation, it was noted that scenario analysis typically examines developments in a more general research context. The recent observation that regional development depends on numerous factors beyond German cooperation may be due to the fact that this study examines a more specific issue than is usually the case. The results show that the coordination of local security actors, the actions of major rival powers, or jihadist groups significantly influence the security situation in West Africa. This may pose a challenge as the focus of the research shifts away from the original focus of the analysis; however, it could also be argued that this study sheds light on how German foreign policy developments fit into the global and local factors influencing the security situation of West African coastal states. FFP has the potential to effectively address the challenges of future security cooperation in West Africa and, in a time of rapid global changes, to establish a sustainable and forward-thinking approach in German foreign policy. By focusing on individual protection and prioritizing vulnerable groups, outdated foreign policy frameworks from past eras with vastly different security contexts can be replaced with a foreign policy that is better suited to the challenges of the 21st century. This progressive approach can help Germany to influence global developments and foreign policy in a sustainable way, allowing it to play a more confident role in the international arena. This is the optimistic theory. In reality, however, it remains to be seen whether the implementation of the FFP will be successful, how it will be integrated into ongoing processes, and how precisely the German FFP approach will be defined. Only after these necessary steps have been taken will it become clear whether this new German foreign policy can achieve its objectives and stand up to real-world challenges. Whether FFP can withstand the direct confrontation with the brutality of warfare or terrorism situations as in West Africa, the heightened security threats in Europe, or the resurgence of nationalist movements within Germany's borders remains to be seen.

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