Cover letter

Name: Dr. Rabeh Morrar

Email: rabeh.morrar@najah.edu

Current Affiliation:

Associate Professor of Economics, An-Najah National University

Research Coordinator, Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS)

Advisory Member, Economic Measurement Committee, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)

Dr. Rabeh Morrar is an Associate Professor of Economics at An-Najah National University in Palestine, and currently serves as the Research Coordinator at the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), as well as advisory member in the "Economic Measurement Committee" in the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). In this role, he is responsible for defining the national research agenda and leading efforts to measure key economic indicators in Palestine. His research is heavily reliant on data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS).

As an Advisory Member in the PCBS, I contribute to the development and refinement of national economic indicators, ensuring alignment with international statistical standards. My role involves advising on methodologies for measuring key economic variables, particularly in innovation, digital financial inclusion, multidimensional poverty, and knowledge economy metrics, to enhance data-driven policymaking and enable international comparability of Palestinian economic statistics.

A key aspect of Dr. Morrar's work is the measurement and development of new economic indicators to address evolving economic and social challenges in Palestine. He played a leading role in developing a national strategy for measuring multidimensional poverty, which integrates economic and social indicators not previously addressed in official statistics. This initiative aimed to create a comprehensive framework that moves beyond traditional income-based poverty assessments, incorporating factors such as health, education, digital inclusion, and access to financial services.

In addition to his work on poverty measurement, Dr. Morrar spearheaded the development of a national strategy for measuring innovation in Palestine, commissioned by PCBS. This initiative involved designing quantitative metrics for tracking innovation inputs and outputs within the Palestinian economy. By establishing a standardized framework, his work has contributed to the creation of robust statistical tools that help policymakers assess innovation-driven economic growth and its impact on economic development.

Dr. Morrar has also made significant contributions to the quantification of digital financial inclusion in Palestine, particularly in assessing barriers to financial access and the role of FinTech and mobile banking. His research focuses on how digital transformation can bridge financial accessibility gaps and promote greater economic participation. His study, *"Explaining the Financial Inclusion and Digital Financial Access Gap in the Aftermath of COVID-19: A Case Study of Palestine,"* provides empirical insights into how digital financial services are reshaping financial inclusion in post-pandemic economies.

Beyond Palestine, Dr. Morrar collaborates with various international organizations, including the International Labour Organization (ILO), where he engages in efforts to develop internationally comparable economic indicators. One of the major challenges in economic measurement is designing metrics that enable meaningful comparisons between Palestine and other countries, particularly within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. His work aims to develop

standardized economic indicators that align with international methodologies used by organizations such as the OECD, IMF, and the World Bank. His research in this area is critical for benchmarking Palestine's economic performance against regional and global standards, thus providing valuable insights for policymakers and researchers.

Dr. Morrar's broader research interests extend to wage inequality and productivity measurement. He has conducted quantitative studies on wage disparities, using advanced econometric techniques such as quantile regression and decomposition analysis to examine labor market trends and income inequality. His research offers insights into how policy interventions and labor market changes affect wage distribution, with a particular focus on regional and sectoral disparities.

Additionally, Dr. Morrar has played a pivotal role in measuring digital transformation and its economic impact. His research in this field focuses on ICT adoption, service sector productivity, and the development of digital economy indicators. His study, *"The Role of ICT in Enhancing Service Sector Productivity: An International Perspective,"* explores how investments in digital infrastructure drive efficiency and foster economic innovation. His work provides critical evidence on the role of digitalization in economic development, particularly in emerging markets.

Beyond academic research, Dr. Morrar has been instrumental in developing economic data products that inform policymakers and practitioners. His key contributions include:

- Palestinian Financial Inclusion Dataset (2022-2023) – A comprehensive dataset measuring financial access barriers, usage patterns, and policy recommendations.

https://erf.org.eg/publications/explaining-the-gender-gap-in-access-to-traditional-and-digital-financial-integration-in-the-aftermath-of-covid-19-a-case-study-of-palestine/.

- Innovation Measurement Framework for Palestine – A national-level strategy for tracking innovation investments and economic outcomes.

https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Downloads/book2212.pdf.

- Multidimensional Poverty Measurement Strategy – A framework integrating new economic and social indicators to assess poverty beyond income-based measures.

https://www.mosd.gov.ps/uploads/1689065569174319254 0.pdf.

Through his research and policy work, Dr. Morrar seeks to bridge the gap between economic measurement, theory, and policy application. His contributions help shape more inclusive and sustainable economic policies, while also supporting the design of internationally comparable economic indicators. By integrating advanced statistical methods with real-world economic

challenges, he aims to enhance economic resilience, financial inclusion, and sustainable growth in Palestine and beyond.

This expertise aligns with the objectives of the Robert Summers Fellowship, particularly in the design and construction of internationally comparable economic data. Dr. Morrar's experience in developing economic indicators, financial inclusion metrics, and innovation measurement frameworks positions him well to contribute to global discussions on economic measurement and further advance the field.