

Sun Life and Beyond Sport Kick Off Second Year of “Hoops+Health” Initiative In Malaysia, Reinforcing Commitment to Youth Wellbeing

*Entering Its Second Consecutive Year, The Initiative Aims to Advance Youth Health
Through Partnerships with Jungle Cats Basketball, USJ20 Basketball Club and Nicol David
Organisation*

Kuala Lumpur, 5 June 2025 – Sun Life, in partnership with global sport for social change foundation Beyond Sport, has announced the extension of its 'Hoops + Health' programme in Malaysia for the second year. This programme is part of Sun Life's regional initiative, which aims to help 45,000 young people across Asia get active by the end of 2025 by providing safe spaces, coaching programmes, and equipment in underprivileged communities.

This year, the Malaysian programme is intensifying its efforts to promote youth active lifestyles. Through a partnership with **Jungle Cats Basketball Academy, Nicol David Organisation and USJ20 Basketball Club**, it aims to engage 160 youth, aged 7 to 16, over more than 200 training hours through a six-month free weekly basketball session. The initiative will also actively engage around 20 **coaches** through a specialised coaching clinic.

Raymond Lew, President/Country Head of Sun Life Malaysia, said, “The Hoops + Health programme will create a real, lasting impact by inspiring young people in Malaysia to stay active through basketball. By collaborating with more youth groups, we are reaching diverse communities and helping youth build both physical and mental resilience. We are proud to support a movement that empowers the next generation to lead healthier and more active lives.”

Sun Life has increased its investment in the programme from 1 million CAD to 1.5 million CAD, underscoring its commitment to combating rising physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour among youth, which are significant risk factors for chronic conditions like diabetes.

Commenting on the partnerships, Alvin Kwong, Head Coach of Jungle Cats Basketball said, “Partnering with Sun Life Malaysia and Beyond Sport, through Hoops + Health, allows us to impact youth far beyond the court - equipping them with life skills, confidence, and healthier habits. The energy and commitment at our free weekly sessions are inspiring, and we are proud to provide a safe, inclusive platform where all kids can grow, thrive, and feel a sense of belonging.”

Datuk Nicol David, Founder of Nicol David Organisation, added, “Our partnership with Sun Life Malaysia through the Hoops + Health initiative directly supports our mission to foster physical, mental, and emotional development. By integrating health and wellness education into our basketball sessions, we're equipping children with lifelong habits that go well beyond the game.”

Bryan Chieng of USJ20 Basketball Club said, “This collaboration has added new depth and meaning to our school exchange programmes and competitions. We are not only developing athletes, we are nurturing character, teamwork, and a deeper understanding of holistic health. It's exciting to witness how sport can spark lasting positive changes among our youth.”

The Hoops + Health programme uses the power of basketball to help kids stay fit and healthy, both physically and mentally. It reaches young people across six locations in Asia, including Malaysia, particularly focusing on marginalised youth. This second year of the programme aims to reach 31,000 people, building on the 14,000 reached in 2024.

After breathing new life into five basketball courts and hosting a series of community events last year, Sun Life is gearing up to do even more in 2025, focusing on three key areas: making it easier to access to physical activity through equipment donations and court maintenance; bringing communities together through more coach training, workshops, and events for all; and getting young people excited about being active by offering free basketball sessions.

As part of the Hoops + Health programme, initiatives include:

- **In Hong Kong and Vietnam**, Sun Life is expanding its existing partnerships with the Basketball Association of Hong Kong, China (BAHKC) and the Saigon Heat, to deliver free youth basketball sessions.
- **In the Philippines and Indonesia**, Sun Life is celebrating its 130th and 30th anniversaries respectively with basketball equipment donations to 130 and 30 schools in low-income areas to encourage children to be more active.
- **In Malaysia and Singapore**, basketball activities and events for many community groups, particularly focused on young players and coaches, as well as engaging Sun Life employees.

Fred Fikouhi-Turner, Executive Director at Beyond Sport, said, "The Hoops + Health programme exemplifies the power sport holds to provide solutions to urgent social challenges. By leveraging basketball, we are creating a platform that not only improves physical health but also fosters community engagement and personal development among youth. We are excited to see how our expanded efforts will further enrich the lives of thousands of children across the region."

Note: All currency figures are in Canadian dollars, unless otherwise stated.

About Sun Life Malaysia

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About Beyond Sport

Beyond Sport is a global foundation that uses sport's unique power to address critical social issues around the world. By championing communities, programs and partnerships that leverage physical activity to build opportunity and equity, it is working to create a more inclusive and progressive world.

Since 2008, the foundation has raised more than \$24 million to promote social change through sport. It has granted over \$13 million to 475 projects across 79 countries in addition to capacity-building support to create sustainable, long-term impact. Learn more about the Hoops + Health program with Sun Life at beyondsport.org/hoops-health.

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