Protect the Engine, Not Just the Car

We insure the car but not the income that pays for it. Why your ability to earn is your family's biggest — and most exposed — asset.

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Agent ID 1115217 · Agency KP100054 · MyVintej — Plan Wisely, Act Brilliantly

Nobody in Malaysia drives an uninsured car. We renew road tax and motor cover every year without blinking — for a machine worth perhaps RM80,000 and falling. Yet the machine that pays for the car, the house, the groceries and the school fees — your ability to earn an income — very often carries no cover at all.

Do the arithmetic once and it becomes impossible to unsee: a 35-year-old earning RM5,000 a month, working to 60, will earn RM5,000 × 12 × 25 = RM1.5 million over their remaining career. That is the family's single largest asset. It is also the only one that vanishes entirely on the day the earner cannot work — through death, disability or serious illness.

RM1.5 mil	RM723,000	67%
remaining lifetime earnings of a 35-year-old on RM5,000/month (to age 60)	average gap for families whose breadwinner has no life insurance (LIAM–UKM study)	of Malaysians' emergency savings last 3 months or less (RMFLS 2023)

The gap has been measured — and it is enormous

The Life Insurance Association of Malaysia (LIAM), with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, studied exactly what happens when a primary wage earner dies. For families with no life insurance, sustaining their lifestyle for just five years would require on average RM723,000. Strikingly, even families that do have cover are underinsured: those with both life and medical policies still faced an average shortfall of RM553,000, and the study put the typical underinsurance gap at RM100,000–RM150,000 per member. Having “a policy” and having enough are very different things.

Now put that against the family's actual defences. Survey after survey — including RinggitPlus's national financial literacy studies — finds that most Malaysians' emergency savings would run out within about three months. The average family is, financially speaking, three months deep. A serious illness lasts years.

What “insuring the engine” actually means

- Life cover — replaces the earnings your family loses if you die, ideally sized against years of income (a common industry rule of thumb is 5–10× annual income, refined by your real numbers).
- Total & permanent disability cover — the engine survives, but can no longer run; income stops while costs rise.
- Critical illness cover — a lump sum when diagnosis strikes, so treatment decisions are medical, not financial.
- Medical cover — keeps hospital bills from consuming the savings meant for everything else.

> *"We insure the RM80,000 machine in the driveway, and leave the RM1.5 million machine that pays for it completely exposed."*

Why this comes first — before saving, before investing

On MyVintej I often show the Wealth Pyramid: protection first, accumulation second, distribution last. That order is not tradition — it is engineering. Every savings plan, every investment, every education fund is powered by next month's income. Protect the engine, and every other plan keeps running even on the worst day. Skip it, and one diagnosis can consume in months what took a decade to save.

A 60-second reality check

Try the Income Protection Gap tool on my MyVintej page: enter your monthly family expenses and accessible savings, and it shows how many months of runway your family currently holds. If the number makes you uncomfortable, that discomfort is information — and the fix is a conversation, not a brochure. We review what you already have (many families are closer than they fear), find the true gap, and size cover that fits your cashflow using my Wealth Planning Cashflow System.

Let's talk about your numbers

No pressure, no obligation — just a conversation about what you read here, or about your own numbers. Every article on MyVintej can become a conversation.

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Sources & further reading

– LIAM–Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia — Underinsurance / Protection Gap Study in Malaysia (liam.org.my)
– RinggitPlus Malaysian Financial Literacy Survey 2023 & 2024 (ringgitplus.com)