‘No budget’ is not an acceptable answer

Kampung Jawa and Klang Jaya 1 were also badly-hit by the flash floods.
Meanwhile, residents of the areas hardest-hit by the flash floods, said to be the worst in history, continue to rail at the council for its inaction.
Retired engineer, Steven Yap, 62, feels that the council has let the residents down.

"The resident of Lorong Bentam, Taman Setia said the Friday morning flash flood was the worst to have hit the housing area in his 20 years of living there."

"It begins as a drizzle around 3.50am that slowly turned into a downpour. By 3am, I was ankle-deep in floodwaters that flooded my house.

"The water had seeped into the hall and kitchen. I found a snake swimming in the water," said Yap.

He said he had made over 10 complaints to the local council but lack of allocation had been the standard response.

"In the last six months, I have sent and emailed letters of complaint and the replies I have received were "no budget".

"What are the authorities doing? We pay the taxes and assessment fees but they tell us they don’t have the budget to resolve our problem."

"It is a problem that has persisted for several years and I see no end to it," he said.

A culvert was built in February, after a visit by DID officers. The culvert cost RM25,000, said Yap.

"I appreciate the effort but the culvert is not going to solve anything because first of all, as a civil engineer, I can tell that the culvert is not properly constructed," said Yap.

He said the monsoon drain at Lorong Nilam was unable to contain the high volume of rainwater.

"This is the main drain for the area. It was build to prevent floods but they built it on the wrong side, and the culvert should have been diverted to the Klang river," he said.

He said the back flow occurs because the drain cannot channel the water.

Another resident, Mustafa Kamil, 55, said: "The flood caused SMK La Salle, Him Hua High School and SMK Tengku Ampuan Rahimah to close.

"My children stayed home and helped to clear the house," he said.

Naysarah Thiagarajah, 70, who lives with his wife in Jalan Tut in Taman Chi Liang, said the frequency of the floods was disturbing.

"The elderly couple had suffered the problem for 10 years.

"They have even built a barrier at the house entrance to stop the water from flowing in but still the house is flooded each time there is a downpour.

"It just takes half-an-hour of heavy rain for the entire house to flood."

"This happens because there is no proper water flow. Why? Because the whole drainage system in our area is jammed up and outdated," he said.

He said their problems did not subside with the floodwaters. The house would have to be cleaned of the mud that covered the house.

"There are only two of us, we have no children.

"How much longer must we suffer," said Naysarah, who has lived there for over 50 years.

"Most of our neighbours have had to level up their land," he said.

He has also sent letters of complaint to the council and Kena Alam Shah assemblyman M. Manoharan, but he has yet to receive a reply from either.

"He urges the authorities, especially the state government to step up efforts to rid the area of flash floods. At press time, DID could not be reached for comment."