1. Introduction

This paper has two objectives. Firstly, it illustrates organizational characteristics typical of major governmental institutions in Singapore and Indonesia. Secondly, it reinforces the importance of understanding these organizational characteristics before attempting to prescribe a management information system (MIS) for these institutions.

A priority program in Singapore is the provision of industrial infrastructure in order to support the right investment climate for multinational companies. To provide this infrastructure a profit-oriented quasi government institution has been set up. The organization develops land and multistoried factories in Singapore, which are leased to foreign and local industrialists. It conducts the planning, design, supervision of construction, and maintenance of its properties, although the actual construction is contracted out. Several departments, including Purchases, Marketing, Design, and Technical, have to coordinate on each property development project (see Fig. 1 for an organization chart). The environment is dynamic, with worldwide demand for industrial property.
A priority program in Indonesia is the transmigration program, which desires to meet important national socioeconomic objectives through government-assisted large-scale movement of agricultural people from heavily overpopulated islands to organized settlements on underpopulated outer islands. The purpose of the program is to improve the standard of living of the transmigrants, lessen population pressures in the areas of egress, contribute to overall regional development, achieve a more balanced distribution of population, and create equitable development in Indonesia. Each project to transmigrate people to a specific area involves a considerable number of interrelated activities, including settler relocation, land clearing, site preparation, and village and community development. Although there is a Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, in fact the project development is a complex interfacing of the joint efforts of at least ten Ministries, including Internal Affairs, Public Works, Agriculture, and Communications.

Unfortunately, most transmigration projects have not been successful. As a result, the Government of Indonesia, in conjunction with the World Bank and UNDP, had identified a specific transmigration project for which a project management and information system was to be designed and implemented. This project envisioned the move of 30,000 families from impoverished and ecologically threatened areas of Java and Bali to four sites in the province of Jambi in Sumatra. Figure 2 provides the organization chart for the project.

Table 1 provides a comparison of the organizational characteristics of the two institutions, which are elaborated on in this paper. These characteristics were investigated in the context of two management activities—strategic planning and project scheduling and control.