

The opening ceremony of the Oranda Jima House in Yamada Machi, May 24, 2014

## Background

Immediately after the dramatic events of March 11, 2011, many people have been looking for ways to help the people so heavily affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Netherlands based private initiatives to help, focused on Yamada Machi, based on the long standing relations between this city and the Netherlands as stipulated in the days immediately after March 11 by Conny Jongbloed (Stichting de Hofreis) and PA International. Oranda Jima is the real name of a small island in the Bay of Yamada Machi, and brings the history between this place and the Netherlands back to 1643.

The Oranda Jima Foundation was established in 2011 with several Netherlands-Japan relations related institutions including the NCCJ, Japan Netherlands Society and Dutch companies as founding members, to secure a channel for the money and gifts in kind towards the ideas raised. The Oranda Jima Foundation formulated its main goal in the Articles of Incorporation as follows:

*“The purpose of the Association shall be to engage in economic assistance and a range of other support activities for residents of Yamada-machi, Shimohei-gun, Iwate prefecture, in order to contribute to the sound upbringing of children and juveniles and support the reconstruction of areas devastated by the Great East Japan Earthquake.”*

And it reads further:

*“In order to fulfill the purpose set forth above, the Association shall engage in:*

- (1) Donations and other support activities for the activities toward the reconstruction of devastated area, including in connection with the construction of new or replacement children's facilities.*
- (2) Extending scholarships and financial and other support activities for education and training programs.*
- (3) Any other businesses necessary to fulfill the purpose of the Association.*

*Business set forth in each item of the preceding paragraph shall be carried out Yamada-machi, Shimohei-gun, Iwate Prefecture.”*

This purpose has been achieved at this moment with the completion of the Funakoshi After School and Care Center “Oranda Jima”, shortly the “Oranda Jima House”.

On May 24, we will formally open the house, a design of the Dutch Architect Martin van der Linden in the presence of many of the sponsors who have made this day possible, and formally transfer the ownership of the house from the Oranda Jima Foundation to the Yamada Machi Authorities.