



Catherine Spencer

Chief Executive Officer



Catherine Spencer became Chief Executive Officer, The Seafarers' Charity in July 2019. Under her leadership the charity changed from Seafarers UK to its new name, The Seafarers' Charity. Working with the senior leadership team and board of trustees, she introduced the charity's first ever strategic plan, creating five strategic outcomes to improve life for seafarers, and a long-term finance strategy. Under her collaborative leadership the charity has taken a 'theory of change' approach, introducing research and advocacy to better understand the causes of disadvantage. This has had a positive impact on the sector and includes introducing new programmes to tackle suicide, sexual harassment, and redundancy. The charity released an additional £2M funding to support seafarers affected by Covid19 and has recently worked with charities and the maritime sector to create the Seafarers' International Relief Fund, providing humanitarian relief in India and the Philippines during Covid 19 and now supporting seafarers and their families affected by the Ukraine Crisis.

Prior to her role at The Seafarers' Charity, Catherine was acting Chief Operating Officer and Director of Communications and Change Management at a large complex international public health research organisation, icddr,b, in Dhaka, Bangladesh during a period of immense change internally, and external terrorist activity. The three and half years Catherine spent living and working in Bangladesh provided insight into research and public health in the Global South. Catherine's role included leading the creation and implementation of a strategic plan, improving the work environment and overhauling Communications. Catherine worked closely with trustees and international core donors to ensure the organisation was well governed and contributed to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Between 2008-2015 Catherine held various senior management roles at the Army Families Federation, including three years as Chief Executive.

Catherine lives with her family in Wiltshire, England after many years moving frequently, including living and working in Canada, Germany, Cyprus and Bangladesh.