

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Researching and writing this book was a powerful personal and professional experience, and many people graciously and enthusiastically helped me bring it to life.

My warmest thanks, and most profound debt, go first and foremost to the sex workers in Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda who created a space for me in their communities, believed in the importance of this project, and graced it with their participation. They have granted me the enormous privilege of documenting and illuminating their stories. They are the soul of this book, and I hope it will always stand as a testament to their inspiring activism.

This project would not have taken flight without the expert and dedicated assistance of those who helped facilitate my fieldwork. Tosh Legoreng in Botswana, John Mathenge and Phelister Abdalla in Kenya, Marlene Ladine in Mauritius, Felicita Hikuam in Namibia, Pat Abraham in Nigeria, Kholi Buthelezi in South Africa, and Daisy Nakato in Uganda were my entry points to a whole universe of wonderful activists and organizations. They have my profound respect and unfailing gratitude.

Elizabeth Gyori and Nimrah Najeel provided consistently excellent research assistance and cheered me on throughout the entire writing and editing process. Katy Glenn Bass graciously provided meticulous feedback on draft chapters as I wrote them. I will forever be thankful for Elizabeth, Nimrah, and Katy's generous editorial and emotional support, which propelled me forward with confidence as I embarked on the sometimes daunting and always thrilling task of writing my first book.

I am extraordinarily grateful to the scholars and advocates—all of whom do urgent, purposeful, and inspiring work—who read and commented on the manuscript in whole or in part. Aziza Ahmed, who has generously supported this project from its early stages, gave the entire manuscript a thorough and wise reading. Lori Adorable provided wonderfully rich and incisive feedback on many chapters. Melinda Cha-

teauvert, Clare Huntington, and Sienna Baskin offered probing and thoughtful insights, and Darby Hickey graciously reviewed several chapters.

Thanks are also due to David Henry Sterry, Hakima Abbas, Jennifer Gordon, and Matthew Greenall, who provided astute suggestions on the proposal; Gideon Engelbrecht for his beautiful digital artwork; and the global community of sex workers and allies on Twitter, who are an endless well of information, insight, and inspiration.

I am thrilled that this book found its home at NYU Press, and I thank my editor, Clara Platter, for enthusiastically embracing this project. I am also grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their invaluable and provocative insights that enriched the final manuscript.

For almost a decade, I have had the sheer good fortune of making the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice at Fordham Law School my professional home. It has been one of the great gifts of my life. My deepest thanks to Jim Leitner and Tracy Higgins for their friendship and support for the work of the Walter Leitner International Human Rights Clinic, which I have had the honor of directing since its founding and where the seeds of this book were first planted. Jim and Tracy's astonishing generosity has played a defining role in my professional growth and enduring happiness—I will never be able to thank them enough. Thanks to my cherished friends and colleagues, Jeanmarie Fenrich and Paolo Galizzi, for their unwavering personal and professional support. I am also grateful to Rita Astoor for the helpful research she always delivered with characteristic good cheer, and to Martin Flaherty and Liz Wickeri for their encouragement.

At Fordham Law School, I am enormously grateful to Sheila Foster, who granted me the sabbatical that allowed me the time, space, and freedom to write this book. Fordham also provided the research funding that made much of the fieldwork possible. I also thank my Fordham colleagues for their useful comments on the proposal at an early workshop for this project. Over the years, many Fordham students and alumni contributed to this book by conducting research, transcribing audio interviews, and assisting me in the field. I send my gratitude to all of them, with extra-special thanks to Beth Gavin, Nita Narayan, Rebecca Marlin, Scarlett Carmago, Grace Lee, Sungin Jung, Katie Waizer, Justin Brown, and Tessa Juste.

All my love and thanks to my wonderful family for their tender and steadfast encouragement. My beloved brothers, Drs. Obi, Chudi, and Fofie Mgbako, are my closest friends, and they have fiercely supported me in everything I have ever done. It is a supreme joy journeying through life hand-in-hand with them. Heartfelt thanks also to my sister-in-law, Maritza Mgbako, and my nephews, Kieren and Bryson Mgbako. Finally, and most important, I thank my utterly remarkable parents, Eze Iddi Dr. Ambrose Mgbako and Iyom Enyikwoku Deborah Mgbako. From the time I was young, my parents nurtured and supported my global adventures and Africanist leanings. They have been the shining, unwavering light throughout my life. With all that I am, and from the depths of my heart, I dedicate this book to them.

This page intentionally left blank