

Preface

In 2009, I was accepted to Maastricht University to complete my Ph.D. as part of the IS Academy Migration and Development Project funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Within this project, my role was to work on the topic of return migration and to lead the fieldwork in Ethiopia. Upon my first trip to Ethiopia in the spring of 2010, I met with several government officials and international organizations. This was the first time I learned about the complexities of migration in Ethiopia: the large number of women going to the Middle East for domestic work; the return of diaspora members who were opening new businesses and contributing to growing the country; and the array of highly skilled students being trained abroad and returning to work in both the public and private sector after their studies. From this preliminary trip, I knew that any research conducted on return to Ethiopia had to encompass all of these different groups.

The reintegration strategies approach emerged from a comprehensive multidisciplinary literature review of the migration, forced migration, sociology, and political science disciplines. My motivation in developing the approach was to further elicit the intricacies of reintegration in a comparative context for different groups of migrants. I wanted to show

that reintegration is an individualized process that people go through in different ways depending on their experiences and the choices they make. This book explores the process of reintegration and how different women have navigated their reintegration in Ethiopia.

This book would not have been possible without several people that have assisted me throughout the process, and a few of whom deserve a specific mention here. My Ph.D. supervisors, Jean-Pierre Cassarino and Khalid Koser, have both been an inspiration for improving and further developing this work. Jean-Pierre and I have discussed in depth the reintegration strategies, the terms for the different reintegration groups, and their further application over several sessions. I am extremely grateful for their excellent support throughout this process. Melissa Siegel brought me to Maastricht for this project, which has changed my life over the course of this book. I am grateful to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for funding this work. Most importantly, this book would not have been possible without the constant support of my husband, Jordon, who has always encouraged, inspired, and challenged me. My daughter, Mackenzie, was born in the middle of the Ph.D. process while I was writing the manuscript that has evolved into this book and has been a wonderful joy everyday. This book is dedicated to both of you.

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