Acknowledgements

Each of the articles brought together in this thesis (except chapter seven) includes an acknowledgements section. However, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to those who are not identified and to elaborate on the roles of key individuals.

My thanks first go to my supervisor, Robert Pool. The funding that he secured for the research on intermittent preventive treatment of malaria in infants (IPTi) and the social and cultural context of malaria during pregnancy (MiP) made this thesis possible. Robert’s role extended, however, far beyond that of the funding process. We first met in 2007 when he interviewed me for a research assistant post in Barcelona. Of the three of us employed at that time, I was the first to start my contract and I was soon off to Tanzania and Kenya for an IPTi site visit. Making that trip was the first step in this long process. So, thanks for trusting in me, letting me dive in at the deep end and for providing judicious supervision over the past seven years.

During the IPTi research, I also worked closely with Marjolein Gysels. I am grateful for her cheer and guidance along the way. Also, as a member of interview panel for the position in Barcelona, Marjolein also helped to set the wheels of this thesis in motion. At the Barcelona Centre for International Health Research (CRESIB), Lianne Straus deserves recognition for her work with Robert to obtain the funding for the MiP research. Working closely with Arantza Meñaca, particularly on the three empirical MiP articles over the last couple of years, was also an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

The success of these programmes of research was dependent on our collaborators at the multiple field sites. I would like to make particular mention of George Okello, Walter Olilo and Ken Ondeng’e. Their hard work, geniality and even cooking skills made the data collection for the IPTi research in Asembo Bay an experience to remember fondly. It was also a pleasure to work with Florence Were and Peter Ouma in during fieldwork for the MiP research in Siaya.

I am also extremely grateful to the respondents who gave up time to participate in this research. In Asembo Bay and Siaya, where I was most involved with data collection, the welcome that I received was often overwhelming in its generosity.

Many others members of the IPTi and MiP teams who are not included as authors or in the chapter acknowledgements merit a mention. They include Peter Otieno, who provided logistical support at the IPTi site in Kenya. Many
thanks also to the data collection teams: (in Tanzania) Paul Mssika, Benson Ogada, Gloria Peter, Rose Luka and Anna Kaale; (in Ghana) Gertrude Nsormah Nyaaba, Phyllis Abugri, Dominic Anaseba, Evans Atuick, Charity Siayire, Louis Alatinga, and Gideon Lugunia; and (in Malawi) Patience Mamba, Priscilla Chimwele and Blessings Kaunda, Andrew Simwaka, Collins Zamawe, Chikondi Kwalimba and Alinafe Chibwana.

I would also like to thank other members of the backstage cast of administrators and managers who facilitated the IPTi and MiP research: Sam Mardell, Sira Rodrigo and Adrea Egan in Barcelona; Rose Odera in Kenya; and Alison Reynolds and Jenny Hill in Liverpool. I am also eternally grateful to the drivers who dealt with the terrible roads in Kenya and delivered me safely to and from the field sites.

In Amsterdam, I would like to thank Anita Hardon, who granted additional funding that enabled me to continue writing up the results of this research and to finalize the thesis. Since moving to the Netherlands, I have also been extremely fortunate to share an office with an remarkable group of academics: Rosalijn Both, Eva Vernooij, Eric van der Sijpt, Josien de Klerk, Amanda Brandallero and Marije de Groot have made Het Spinhuis a very welcoming place. Thanks to Marije also for translating the summary into Dutch.

This thesis is also predicated on my previous study, broader education and upbringing. I would therefore particularly like to thank my parents for their invaluable role in this process and for supporting my decisions to embark on a slightly unconventional and meandering career path.

I owe my greatest debt of gratitude to the keystone in my life. Natalie is the person on which this thesis and all else rests and I am eternally thankful for her unwavering support and understanding throughout almost 10 years of nomadism together. Our adventure is however far from over and the next chapter – that of parenthood – will probably be our greatest challenge.