The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) was born of a big idea: to redirect some of the vast sums of money that the most powerful nations were investing in their military might after the Second World War, and to use these funds not to fight each other but to fight together against a common enemy: cancer. Cooperation, not conflict.

Although the financial model never materialized, the second component of the big idea – a spirit of cooperation – was realized, and flourished. Since its creation in 1965 as the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization, IARC has conducted research worldwide and helped thousands of cancer researchers from developing countries hone their skills through fellowships, courses, and collaborative projects.

This book charts the birth of IARC during the 1960s – a period of great optimism for international cooperation and medical science. It goes on to describe the Agency's major achievements over the past five decades in terms of the development of tools for conducting cancer research, the identification of risk factors, and the evaluation of preventive interventions. By examining IARC's history, the authors illustrate how, despite the changing landscape of cancer research, the original vision continues to be a valid response to the needs for cancer prevention and control worldwide. This is ever more the case as the disease burden falls more heavily on developing countries, and international collaborative studies are increasingly relied upon to address national priorities for cancer control.
International Agency for Research on Cancer
THE FIRST
1965 - 2015
YEARS

International Agency for Research on Cancer
World Health Organization

Rodolfo Saracci and
Christopher P. Wild

Lyon, 2015
This book is dedicated to

Marika and Heather

who share our passion for the Agency