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Sommario/riassunto	In the late 1960's, the World Health Organization initiated a series of international studies of the incidence, characteristics, course, and consequences of schizophrenia. Those studies - the largest ever in the history of psychiatry - provided important data about the disorder in groups of patients living in different countries and cultures, and first focused attention on the differences in short-term prognosis for schizophrenia between the third world and industrialized countries. In the 1990's, the International Study of Schizophrenia (ISoS) set out to relocate those subjects and to determine