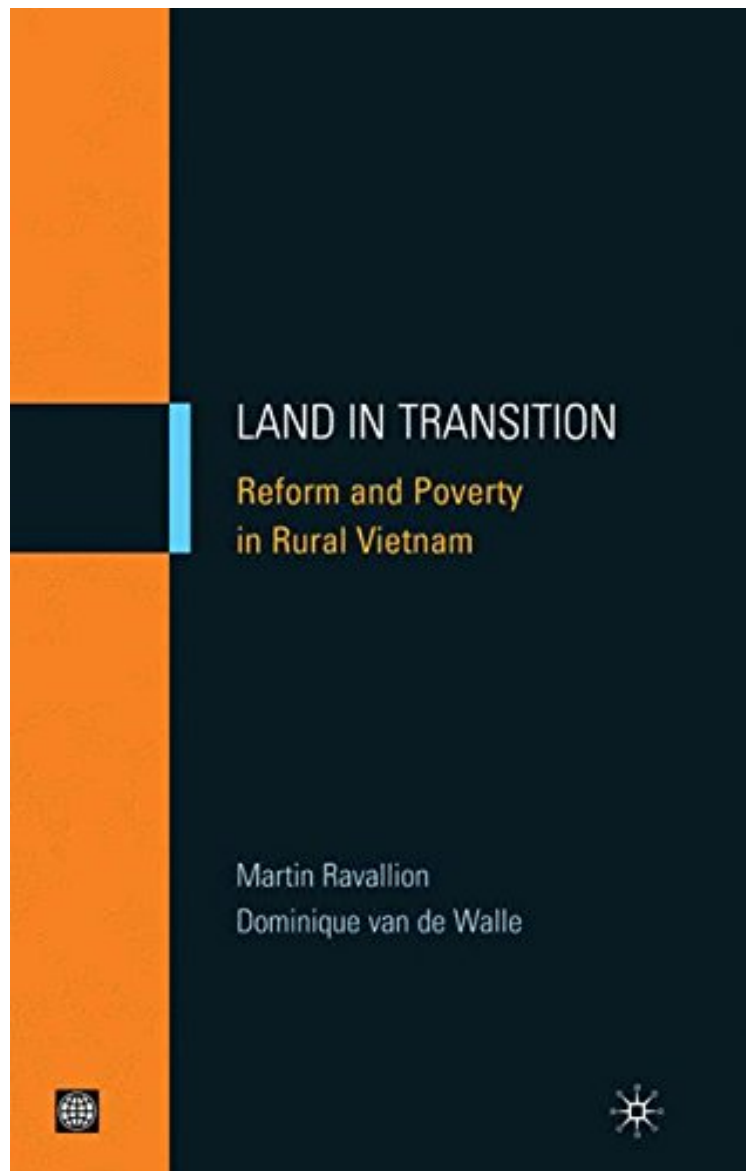


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Land in Transition: Reform and Poverty in Rural Vietnam (Equity and development)

Martin Ravallion, Dominique van de Walle
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Martin Ravallion, Dominique van de Walle : Land in Transition: Reform and Poverty in Rural Vietnam (Equity and development) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all

praised *Land in Transition: Reform and Poverty in Rural Vietnam* (Equity and development):

This book is a case study of Vietnam's efforts to fight poverty using market-oriented land reforms. In the 1980s and 1990s, the country undertook major institutional reforms, and an impressive reduction in poverty followed. But what role did the reforms play? Did the efficiency gains from reform come at a cost to equity? Were there both winners and losers? Was rising rural landlessness in the wake of reforms a sign of success or failure? *'Land in Transition'* investigates the impacts on living standards of the two stages of land law reform: in 1988, when land was allocated to households administratively and output markets were liberalized; and in 1993, when official land titles were introduced and land transactions were permitted for the first time since communist rule began. To fully assess the poverty impacts of these changes, the authors' analysis of household surveys is guided by both economic theory and knowledge of the historical and social contexts. The book delineates lessons from Vietnam's experience and their implications for current policy debates in China and elsewhere.

Ravallion and van de Walle have produced a beautifully clear, careful, and readable analysis of Vietnam's agrarian reforms. They show that the 1988 de-collectivization largely avoided elite capture and created near-equal family farms. These produced more, and were more efficient, than the previous collectives. In the interests of equity, the reform did not aim at maximum economic performance; but as the authors show, the sacrifice was not large. The authors explore whether China can now learn from Vietnam about similar prospects for market-friendly reforms. --- Michael Lipton, Founder and Research Professor, Poverty Research Unit, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom This is a very interesting and very well researched book. The authors are leading experts in this field, and this shows. They have gone beyond simple analyses to address a set of key issues, such as whether rising landlessness is a sign of success or failure. They have also gone out of their way to come up with carefully drafted conclusions, linking these closely to the policy debate on equity and efficiency in Vietnam. I expect this report to become a very important and very influential publication, not just in Vietnam but also globally. --- Johan Swinnen, Professor of Development Economics, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium About the Author MARTIN RAVALLION is Senior Research Manager in the Development Research Group of the World Bank. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the London School of Economics, and Political Science, UK, and has taught economics at L.S.E., Oxford University, the Australian National University, and Princeton University. His main research interests over the last twenty years have concerned poverty and policies for fighting it. He has advised numerous governments and international agencies on this topic, and he has written extensively on this and other subjects in economics, including two books and over 150 papers in scholarly journals and edited volumes. He currently serves on the Editorial Boards of ten economics journals and is a Senior Fellow of the Bureau for Research in Economic Analysis of Development. DOMINIQUE VAN DE WALLE is a Lead Economist in the Development Research Group (Human Development and Public Services Team). Her research interests are in the general area of poverty and public expenditures. She holds a Masters in Economics from the London School of Economics and Political Science, UK, and a Ph. D. in economics from the Australian National University, and began her career at the Bank as a member of the core team that produced the 1990 World Development Report on Poverty. She has worked on Argentina, Hungary, Morocco, Tunisia, Zimbabwe, Yemen, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. The bulk of her recent research has been on Vietnam, covering poverty, rural development, land reform, infrastructure (rural roads and irrigation) and poverty, impact evaluation and safety nets.