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Remittances, Living Arrangements, and the Welfare of the Elderly in Vietnam

During a time of rapid economic transformation in Vietnam, we examine two possibilities for elderly support: living together with children and receiving remittances. Our analysis uses four household surveys conducted in Vietnam between 1992 and 2004. With the highly detailed 1997/98 survey, we find that 73.1 percent of Vietnamese elderly are living with children and 34.8 percent were either receiving remittances directly or married to a recipient. From our logistic regression analysis, we can further determine that living with children and remittances both serve continuing roles for elderly support, and our findings suggest that expanding the pension system in Vietnam can potentially play an important role in reducing elderly poverty without crowding out these other support mechanisms.