

# DATA AVAILABILITY

More economies provided data on the value and number of loans and deposits across all types of institutions in the *Financial Access 2010* survey compared to the 2009 survey (figure 5.1). Information for commercial banks remains the most comprehensive. But even for commercial banks, while most economies provided information on the values of deposits and loans, only 76 percent had data on the number of deposits and 53 percent on the number of loans.

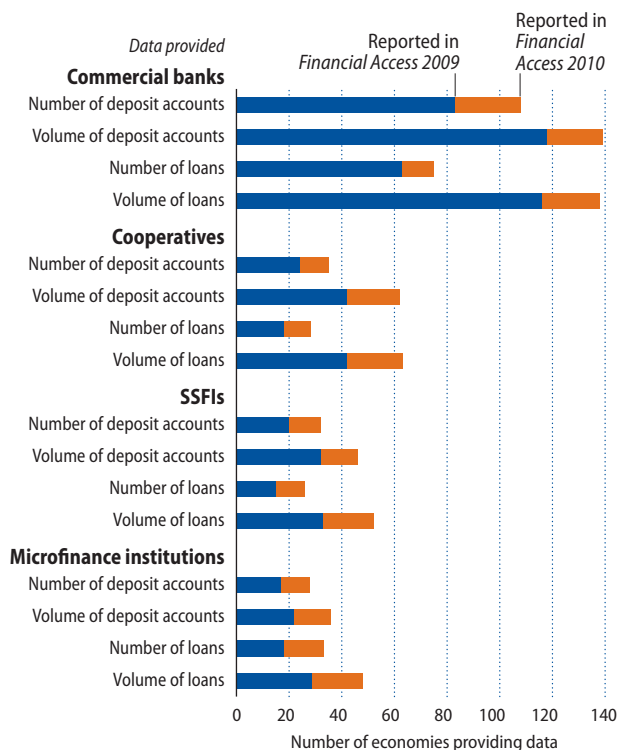
Information for nonbanks is limited for four primary reasons. First, if nonbanks are not regulated by the main financial regulator, this regulator may not have data on these institutions. Second, even if nonbanks are regulated, it may be difficult to collect accurate data on their performance because of a lack of adequate systems in nonbanks. Third, in economies where there are several types of regulated nonbanks, the regulator may be able to collect information on only certain types of institutions, resulting in distorted statistics. Fourth, institutions may change their type (in other words, the way they categorize themselves), or a new type of institution may be introduced that fits into one of the categories in the *Financial Access 2010* survey, introducing breaks in data consistency.

Most economies take measures to improve data availability, demonstrated by the improved responses to the *Financial Access 2010* survey and responses to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) "Access to Finance" project launched this year.<sup>1</sup> A number of countries, such as Mexico and Bangladesh, were able to provide more comprehensive coverage of nonbanks this year, including institutions that were not covered last year.

With improved and cheaper technology and the push for transparency and better reporting, data on access will undoubtedly improve over time. But even today, available data provide useful insights. A consistent sample in which comparable data are available for both years is sufficiently large, at least for commercial banks, enabling empirical analysis presented in this

FIGURE 5.1

## More economies provided data in 2010



Source: *Financial Access* database.

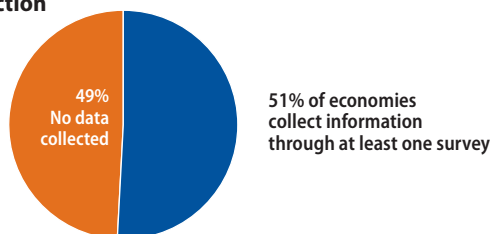
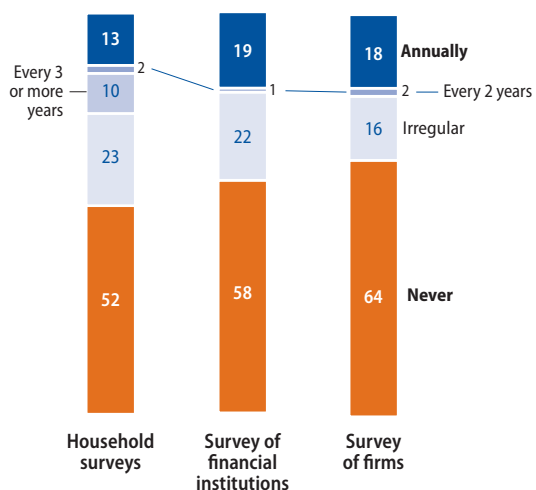
Note: SSFI = specialized state financial institution.

report: 85 economies for the number of deposits and 65 for the number of loans.

To understand what research and data collection instruments beyond regular reporting are available to financial regulators, the *Financial Access 2010* survey asked what type of survey instruments (household surveys, surveys of firms, surveys of financial institutions) they use for collecting information on the level of access to financial services.

Fifty-one percent of financial regulators responding say they collect at least some information through one type of survey instrument (figure 5.2). Household surveys are most popular, followed by surveys of financial institutions. Surveys of firms are the least popular.

FIGURE 5.2

**Data collection****% of economies by type and frequency of survey**

Source: Financial Access database.

Regular surveys by regulators are an important source of information for guiding policy. For example, in the United States, the Senior Loan Officer Opinion Survey on Bank Lending Practices is conducted quarterly to inform the meetings of the Federal Open Market Committee determining U.S. monetary policy. The survey questions cover changes in the standards and terms of the banks' lending and the state of business and household demand for loans.

These surveys could also become an important tool for collecting information comparable across countries by introducing standardized questions.

**NOTE**

1. IMF (2009).