The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) domestic labor market restructuring (Nitaqat changes) resulted in massive returns of foreign migrant workers since April 2013. Most affected is Yemen, due to the immediate land proximity with KSA, from where returns are easier to effect. Most Yemeni migrants are returned through the Border Crossing Point (BCP) of Al Tuwal, approximately 10km north of Haradh in Hajjah Governorate. Once at Al Tuwal, many require urgent humanitarian assistance. At the Ministry of Expatriates’ request, IOM started providing emergency health care and stabilization, food, water and material assistance to the most needy, notably sick and injured returnees as they are offloaded at the border as of September 2013. Since October 2013, IOM also monitors the flow of returnees at Al Tuwal. Between October 2013 and November 2014, IOM interviewed 75,479 migrants, approximately 15.3% of the daily flow.

Despite a sustained flow of slightly over 1000 migrants returned daily from KSA at Al Tuwal throughout November 2014, the total of Yemeni returnees for this month is 27% lower compared to November 2013. There are other significant differences between the profiles of migrants returned respectively in November 2013 and November 2014. Among those returned in 2013, the proportion of migrants engaged in work while in KSA is 5.2 times higher than that among the November 2014 cohort; November 2013 returnees were 6 times more likely to send remittances home. However, the proportion among the November 2014 returnees who reported abuse is 2 times higher compared to those reporting it in November 2013. Yet the November 2014 returnees indicate their being 2.8 times more intent in returning to KSA.