6666 - Should she continue working in place where she mixes with men?

the question

I am a muslim woman raised with basic Islamic teachings but overall in a more Western way – educated abroad in a European university, and worked thereafter in a large multinational following what is traditionally known as the "career path". This way of life has been encouraged by the parents and the lifestyle under which I have been raised. Furtheremore as my parents are no longer working I have become the financial support for the family. I am currently living alone at 31 years in a Western country where there are no Arabs or Mulsims around. And due to my Islamic upbriging find myself islolated from my surroundings as I have no interest in going to parties, bars, dating etc….
My choices are 2. To return home under the parents umbrella and settle for any work to keep me busy and if lucky find a husband. This will however mean sacrificing income at least for the short term which will be difficult for the family as well as sacrificing a very good position at the company I am in. Or alternately continue in this career path hoping that someday I will meet a good muslim man who can help me live a more mulsim way of life.
What is the isalmic point of view in such instances.

Detailed answer

The choice facing our sister is a choice between what is right and what is wrong, between what is halal and what is haram.

Hence we can only advise our sister to protect the best thing that she possesses, which is her religion and chastity, and to stay with her family so as to protect herself and be among those who will protect her. Perhaps Allah will make it easy for her to find work that is acceptable according to sharee'ah, and a righteous husband. We give her the glad tidings of the hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): "Whoever gives up something for the sake of Allah, Allah will compensate him with something better than that."

(Classed as saheeh by Shaykh al-Albaani – may Allah have mercy on him – in Hijaab al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah).

How many brothers and sisters have left their work– even when they were earning lots of money – leaving for the sake of Allah after learning that the environment they were in went against Islamic rulings, then Allah opened many ways for them and gave them a bountiful provision, and guided their hearts to something better than they had been following before.

We also want to remind our sister about her parents, and tell her that staying with them and taking care of them is much better than being apart from them. She should not pay attention to their wishes that she should do work that is not acceptable according to sharee'ah. Many people are keen for worldly things, and they do not pay attention to the forbidden and objectionable things that may surround the work their daughters and sons do.

Striving for the purpose of this transient world at the expense of one's religion is not something that we accept for our sisters or daughters, or for the sister who is asking this question.

You should not pay any attention to the fact that this is an international company or that the salary is tempting. That does not mean anything if it also brings the wrath of Allah. It is bad enough that you are with non-mahram men at work, let alone that you are in a country where there are no Muslims. Moreover, you may have to travel without a mahram to the kuffaar countries and stay among them. You may be living in a house on your own, which poses a danger to your religious commitment, your person and your honour, as is quite obvious. The Islamic texts indicate that it is haram for women to mix with men, to travel without a mahram and to settle among the kuffaar.

Your idea of isolating yourself of which you speak may not last for long, because of the many temptations and the lack of help and support. The path of evil starts with one step, and if a person follows it, it may be difficult for him to think of himself and his Hereafter. By the Grace of Allah towards you, you are seeking advice and knowledge of the Islamic rulings, so do not feel any regrets about this world. Simple things are sufficient for the one who is content with what Allah gives him; it is greed that destroys taqwa and robs people of their common sense.

There is nothing to stop you from looking for work that is acceptable according to sharee'ah, especially since some companies now employ people at home, letting them do their work via the Internet. This may be a suitable alternative, especially for Muslim women.

We ask Allah to guide you to that which will be beneficial for you, and to protect your religious commitment, for He is the One Who is the Guardian of that and is Able to do that. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad.

And Allah knows best.