ICH and community development have two-fold relationship: the knowledge that is the basis for many types of ICH is crucial to sustainable development and healthy communities; while communities without an adequate economic and/or land base will be too busy struggling for their basis subsistence to be able to practice much of their ICH. Implementation would involve a broad range of governmental policies in sectors such as education, information infrastructure, economic development and resource management as well as cultural policy.

ICH is necessary for healthy, sustainable communities

- Various types of ICH are key to communities and groups being able to solve their own problems, from social problems to sustainable development.
- ICH in the domain of “knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe” (Article 2, section 2 (d) of the Convention) has been acknowledged as crucial for sustainability (from a precursor to the Convention on Biodiversity, sorry I don’t have the reference). The effective protection of environment is difficult or impossible without knowledge of long term environment of local area.
- ICH in the other domains of “oral traditions and expressions,” “performing arts,” “social practices, rituals and festive events” and “traditional craftsmanship” (Article 2, sections 2 (a), (b), (c) and (e) of the Convention) support social cohesion, ethnic, community and individual identity. (Note that there as ICH changes, it can cross-cut ethnic groups. For example, Nisga’a First Nations people and Chinese Canadians in Vancouver BC often celebrate the Lunar New Year in a joint festival). Violence, including suicide, rises when people’s identity is damaged or lost. In conjunction with Aboriginal professionals, elders and culture bearers, Aboriginal cultural traditions are being incorporated into a broad range of service programs, including addiction prevention and treatment, suicide intervention, prison rehabilitation programs, mental health programs and economic development.

Community development may be necessary for safeguarding ICH

- marginalized communities politically and economically are most challenged to maintain their ICH because of challenges such as
  - loss of access to land, tangible heritage, resources, etc
  - geographic dispersal making knowledge transmission and cultural practices difficult or impossible
• oppressive policies intended to assimilate (i.e. prohibition on speaking own language, on gathering in public);
• cultural genocide practices, include those which separate generations (seniors in homes far away, children in residential schools)
• ICH can be the basis for economic development; development of cultural tourism ventures and development of market for objects based on traditional craftsmanship and symbols are common approaches. Strong involvement of the cultural custodians is critical for resolving tensions and conflicts which arise from commodifying ICH.

**Development or maintenance of a cultural infrastructure to support ICH is a key aspect of community development.**

• acknowledge education: formal intergenerational learning (family and school based) (cite convention)
• lifelong learning, formal or otherwise. Libraries and other knowledge centres are cost effective institutions for lifelong learning (i.e. everyman’s university as mandate for early public libraries)
• writing and documentation are being incorporated into oral based knowledge systems, including computer language learning programs and audiovisual recordings, documentary and educational filmmaking. These developments result in a broadening of the types of literacies (visual literacy, written literacy, etc) that become part of ICH as they are practiced and transmitted
• Dismantling existing educational systems which support policies of assimilation or cultural genocide are as important as developing educational systems which support ICH.
• Information professionals (storytellers, archivists, librarians) are knowledge brokers; as culture (and ICH) is knowledge based as well as practice based, these professionals have a key role in the long term care of knowledge (tangible and intangible forms of knowledge) and in facilitating/ ensuring access to knowledge.
• These professionals and related institutions (libraries, resource centres, keeping places, cultural ed centres, etc) making available to community members
• Involvement of family and cultural custodians in development of educational curriculum is crucial for developing an educational system to support ICH by transmitting ICH across generations within a group and by raising awareness of ICH outside of that group.
• Access to culturally significant places and tangible cultural heritage is an important aspect of a cultural infrastructure.