Abstract

Environmental enteropathy (EE) is an acquired condition of reduced intestinal barrier and absorptive function that is pervasive in developing countries and contributes greatly to impaired mucosal immunity, stunting and subsequent negative cognitive impacts. Decades of research on the condition have failed to provide new insights into the prevention, causation or treatment of the disorder. It is now emerging that the diversity of exposures that individuals encounter in the environment throughout their lifetimes—the “exposome”—may influence EE in ways that have not been explored or connected to existing knowledge. Through a historical approach, this review examined the extant literature for such connections as well as makes recommendations for future diagnostics and logical next steps for innovative research approaches to enhance our understanding of this enteric dysfunction.